E. Floyd's Gift

THE

MIDNIGHT BELL,

A GERMAN STORY.

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A GERMAN STORY,

FOUNDED ON INCIDENTS IN REAL LIFE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

A round unvarnish'd tale. OTHELLO.

VOL. I.

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THE

MIDNIGHT BELL.

CHAP. I.

I am not mad; this hair I tear is mine;
I am not mad; I would to heaven I were!
For then 'tis like I should forget myself.
Oh, if I could, what grief should I forget?
If I were mad, I should forget my son,
Or madly think a babe of clouts were he:
I am not mad; too well, too well I feel
The diff'rent plague of each calamity.

KING JOHN.

COUNT Cohenburg was descended from one of the noblest houses of Saxony: his castle, situated on a branch of the river Elbe, was one of the most magnificent in

the German empire; his income was large, and his character celebrated, as one of the firſt men of his age.

At an early period of his life he eſpouſed the ſecond daughter of the marquis of Brandenburgh, and ſhe bleſſed her huſband with five ſons; the eldeſt and the youngeſt of whom alone ſurvived their mother.

At the time of count Cohenburg's death, which did not happen till he had ſome years buried his counteſs, Alphonſus, his eldeſt ſon, was in his twenty-ſixth, and Frederic, his youngeſt, in his nineteenth year.

Alphonſus, now count Cohenburg, in his perſon was rather pleaſing than hand-

fome; his height about the middle ſtature, his mind well cultivated in every branch of learning, his temper mild and benevolent, but withall addicted to ſuſpicion.

Frederic was a man formed to captivate; his features were regular, his countenance handſome and prepoſſeſſing, his figure tall and elegant; the advantages of education had been beſtowed on him equally with his brother, but he had not ſo eagerly drank in inſtruction, — he was, however, an agreeable and even a faſcinating companion, — he was paſſionate, but his anger was of a moment.

Arrived at his twenty-ſecond year, Frederic became enamoured of a lady of Luxemburg; ſhe was beautiful, but delicate in the extreme; ſhe was an orphan,

and poſſeſſed of a large fortune:—Frederic purchaſed a manſion in the vicinity of his brother's caſtle, and having eſpouſed his beloved Sophia, every earthly happineſs ſeemed to ſmile on him and his newly-married bride.

Within the year Frederic was bleſſed by the birth of a ſon.

Count Alphonſus was a beholder of his brother's happineſs: he felt a wiſh for the ſame felicity Frederic enjoyed; he accordingly determined to marry, and ſelected from amongſt the beauteous maids who adorned the German court, Anna, the only daughter of the duke of Coblentz. She was a woman in whom every engaging attraction was centred; her form was elegant, her manners affable and po-

lite; there was something in her countenance that outshone regular beauty, and a vivacity in her conversation, that chained the senses of the enraptured listener.

Alphonsus was now as happy as his brother; and in the course of ten months his Anna brought him a son, on the same day on which Sophia gave birth to a second infant, which proved a female.

The name of his father was given to the infant son of count Alphonsus.

The following year Sophia brought her husband a third child, but the period of its entrance into the world was dated by the death of its mother.

The passions of Frederic were strong,

and this proved a ſtroke which went nigh to unman his fortitude; the foothings of his brother however tended greatly to raiſe his depreſſed ſpirits.

Anna proved herſelf a not leſs affectionate ſiſter to Frederic, than a mother to his children; ſhe ſoothed them, conſoled their father, performed for them every lenient action; and in ſhort ſo forcible were her attentions, that ſhe ſucceeded in lightening the burden of their ſorrow.

Count Alphonſus loved his brother tenderly; he looked on his ſorrows with a feeling eye; he would have alleviated them at the expence of half his worth; by any means, rather than by the aſſiduities of his Anna,—he conceived too highly of her to ſuppoſe her capable of be-

flowing on another the minuteſt particle of that love which ſhe bore him;—he even repeated to himſelf that it was her love for him, which induced her thus to attend to his brother;—he knew the evil tendency of ſuſpicion, and had always ſtruggled to combat againſt it; but ſuſpicion was a part of his nature, and would not always be ſubdued.

He watched his brother, and every turn of the counteſs's features when in Frederic's preſence; he was convinced of his miſtake; he was even — the point of apologiſing to his wife on the wrong he had done her in his thoughts, but he conſidered that he ſhould, by ſo doing, only lay open to her an error in his heart, with which ſhe was unacquainted; and therefore contented himſelf with the reſo-

to her difficult.

Frederic's youngest child had survived its mother but a few hours, and, in the third year after her death, his eldest fell a victim to the grave. he recovered from this severe check only to feel a greater,—his daughter died in his arms! — Misfortune seemed to have marked him out for her sport — he resolved to leave the scene of all his woes, and travel: — a kindly farewell was paid by him to his brother and sisters and he departed.

In four years he returned, his manners were much altered; he was become distrustful, uneasy, silent; in short, no longer that of the former court Frederic was it?

Count Alphonsus was moved by his appearance, but his suspicious temper could not forbear revolving a friend which it had once disdained; — he determined however to bear his thoughts in silence, — he did so, — and in the course of eight months, Frederic again left Saxony.

The chief emotion which now fevered the breast of Alphonsus was pity. In fancied he perceived his brother's love for his wife, and his struggle to conceal it. The constable spoke frequently of the change in Frederic's temper, — her language served to convince Alphonsus that his brother was indifferent to her — (for Woman's quick eye can discover the slightest variation, yet he wished Frederic might return.

Five years elapsed ere Frederic revisited Germany; he stayed but a short time in Saxony, and was then absent two more years; on his last return, his former disposition of temper seemed converted into a fettled melancholy; he retired to his mansion, and said he had formed a resolution to live a life of feclusion.

Alphonfus now imagined that he had found [illegible] of gaining Anna's love, and that by pretending to live [illegible] retired in his own manfion, he might [illegible] elude his brother's fufpicion; he ftill, however, determined to keep a feal on his lips, but to open wide his eyes and ears.

The count's only fon, Alphonfus, was now in his feventeenth year; his form was manly, and well turned, his countenance

pair of black eyes, and finely arched eyebrows, his cheeks were ruddy, his lips were the smile of good-humour, and his short black hair hung curling round his neck; his intellects were strong, his genius discerning, and his mind well informed.

Nearly a year had elapsed since the arrival of Frederic in his native country, when an affair of consequence, relating to the will of his late father, called count Alphonsus to the metropolis of the German empire.

He visited his brother the day prior to his departure, — he took a tender farewell of his wife and son — "My Anna is now in Frederic's power!" This idea,

moment arrested his steps, as he was entering the hall of the castle to the vehicle that awaited him — "but is he not bound in honour to protect her? — he is! — and I will not suspect him." — He left the castle and proceeded on his journey, accompanied by an old and faithful servant.

Nearly two months had elapsed since the departure of count Alphonso, ere the period for his return to the castle of Colenburg was mentioned by him in his letters to his wife; he had written frequently to her, and every letter was replete with his anxiety again to behold her.

At length the time for his arrival was fixed, and the countess awaited it with

every mark of ardent love; when, on the morning of the day which he had fixed for his arrival, the servant who had accompanied him came to the castle alone, the anxious looks of the countess demanded a speedy explanation of his tidings.—"Was he the harbinger of the count?" she asked.

"Alas! no," he answered.

"Oh, he is dead! he is murdered!" she exclaimed, and sank senseless on the ground.

Her fears were too well founded; the old servant brought the distressing information, that two ruffians, who had been lurking in a thicket about ten leagues distant

from Odenburg castle, had fallen upon him and stabbed him to the heart.

Tears came to the relief of Alphonfus; and the first words his forrow permitted him to articulate, were an order to a domestic to convey the sad intelligence to his uncle, and request his immediate presence at the castle.

When recollection again returned to the unhappy Anna, she waved her hand in signal to the surrounding domestics, to depart; and, upon being left alone with her son, thus addressed him:

"Alphonfus, the uncle is the murderer of the father!—Sworn to me then with revenge his death."

Alphonsus looked doubtfully on his mother in silent wonder.

Agnes continued: "Then marvellest at my words,—but will not think the troubled spirit be given a vehicle by which the darkest thoughts can paint him?—Oh! I could tell thee"—— she paused.

"Explain thyself, my dearest mother," cried Alphonsus.

"No! I cannot—I will not let thee think so basely of thy father's brother,—time may come, that then"—— she paused a moment,—— "I cannot prove what I've alleged, therefore keep it in thy breast.—But swear to me, by honour,

whenever the murderer stands confessed, thou wilt revenge thy father's death."

"Oh, my mother! do you then think I would be careless in so great a point of duty?—No! let me but know him, and by all my hopes of heaven, my sword shall pierce his heart."

"Thou art my child indeed! good angels guard thee," cried the countess, and embraced him.—"Oh thou dost not know count Frederic; but time will teach thee him."

In due time count Frederic arrived; his countenance bore the marks of abused grief.—Alphonsus could ill brook his presence:—he saw his mother's con-

a time confirmed; — his tongue laboured to accuse the count of his villany, — his heart whispered him to await the proof of his guilt; — he bit his tongue in silence; — his sorrow burst into his eyes, and he rushed from the apartment inarticulately exclaiming, "Oh! my father!"

Towards the evening the count departed; the old servant who had brought the sorrowful intelligence was ordered immediately to return to the corpse, and get it conveyed to the castle with all convenient speed.

Count Frederic took upon himself to prepare for the obsequies of his brother.

After the departure of count Frederic, Alphonsus strongly followed his mother's

confide to him her cause for suspecting his uncle; "I must not — cannot,"— she replied: "time will develope and prove my words. Oh Alphonsus! remember what you have sworn."

"Sacredly I will maintain my vow."

On the next day, which Fredonia spent within the walls of Colbrunting, Alphonsus shunned his presence, and retired on his pretext, to indulge his grief in solitude. After an interval of four hours, thinking his uncle gone, he re-entered the apartment where he had left his mother: but what was his surprise, on his entrance, at seeing her kneeling before the count, and kissing his hand — the rose, and threw herself into a chair.—The count walked to the window — "How does this conduct

[illegible] given of the count?" thought Alphonfus; — his mother perceived his eyes fixed on her, fhe wrung her hands, and lifted them in filent fupplication to heaven.

In a fhort time Frederic departed.

"You have commanded me," faid Alphonfus, after a paufe, "not to afk an explanation of your fufpicions"—he was proceeding, when the countefs rofe from her feat, and burfting into tears, left the apartment.

Alphonfus was ftretched on the rock of doubt, fufpicion, and perplexity. he traverfed the apartment, he threw himfelf on the ground, he rofe again, he walked about the room, he entered the garden,

he walked, he felt it was in vain, the mind cannot fly from itself.

The countess excused herself from appearing at supper;—Alphonsus knew not that the cloth was spread before him, though he leaned the arm on which he rested his head on the table.

At an early hour he retired to his chamber; [illegible] to read;—he read the letters he had received from his father during his absence; his tears ran swiftly down upon them:—he could read no more,—he threw himself upon his bed;—his lamp decayed in the socket, and the obscurity of the scene leaned in union with his feelings.

The ghostly hour of midnight had just

founded, and all the cattle of Colmenburg was swept away. Over the widow Agnesius, the babe of wonderful augury, whilst he laid his drowsy head on his restless bed, he lay ruminating on the occurrences of the preceding day, when a piercing shriek caught his ear, and roused him from his meditations, — it seemed to proceed from the chamber of his mother; he listened — it was not repeated — "Again her grief exceeds the bounds of nature!" he cried, — "Oh wretched woman! Kind heaven, sooth her sorrows!" He sighed, dropped a tear, and sunk upon his pillow.

After a short interval, he fell into a restless slumber; he had not long enjoyed this soft repose, since his father's death, when he was awakened by the opening

of his chamberlain; the dawn of day was beginning to break, and struck so keen Alphonsus, that it was the moment which had usurped his apartment,—her eyes shone like diamonds, her cheeks were pale as death, her countenance betrayed the most visible signs of an agonized heart; she was wrapped in a large garment, and her hair hung dishevelled on her shoulders.

"Alphonsus!" she exclaimed, "observe the mother's words, nor ask their explanation:—instantly fly this castle, nor approach it more, as you value life!—as you value heaven!"

Alphonsus had lain down on the bed without undressing, and now starting from it,—"Why this sudden alarm?" he cried;

"is it that you fear my uncle will perpetrate a second deed, horrid as the first? — fear not for me; I shall live to fulfil my vow."

She shrieked, then said, "You have undone yourself and me — your uncle is innocent — one only way can save us both — fly far from hence — fly from me — fly from your uncle — take that purse, — return not to the castle — gallop the fleetest courser in the stables, and depart while yet the sentinels of the room receive your sleepy orders — embrace me — Oh! no! no! no! — it would ——" a flood of tears prevented for a while her further utterance; she then added, "Go! and may the blessings I can never hope from heaven fall on thee." She gave him the purse; — the palm of her hand

was stained with blood! Alphonsus looked that he saw it; speech was refused him;—the countess met his eye; again she shrieked, "Oh, fly and save me!—I conjure you, fly!"—she cried; and, with a look that seemed to draw blood from her heart, she ran from Alphonsus's chamber, and locked herself within her own.

Thunderstruck by what he had heard and seen, Alphonsus debated four moments how to act; at last he cried,—"Has my unhappy mother lost her reason?—Oh, no! her manner is that of deep sorrow, not of frenzy; she undoubtedly has some strong cause for her commands, but then why conceal it from me!—My uncle, too, declared innocent!—what can the mean?—it is my duty to obey.' He left his chamber, as he pro-

hers, she opened the door, and fled. — "Speed thee, my beloved Alphonsine!" — He slipped, but the lady held it again. He [illegible] kissed her hair, pressed the heavy gems, and proceeded to the ladder. Having bridled his frightful horse, he mounted, and with a full and [illegible] left the castle of Dalenburg.

"Fly me, — fly this castle, as you value life, — as you value heaven." These words he repeated again and again; — he dwelt on them, till confusion had lost in a maze of thought; — he proceeded forwards about five leagues, without thanking his pace, before he inquired of himself whither he was going, — and by them dictated how to retrace himself. In this [illegible] he perceived a dreary [illegible]

big above fome cluftered trees on the brow of an eafy hill: thither he directed his fteed; the villagers were juft rifen to their labour as he reached it, — they looked at him with an eye of inquifitivenefs: — he perceived that they knew him not, but that idle curiofity had attracted their attention: having refrefhed his fteed, he again fet forward, — he wifhed, with all poffible fpeed, to leave that part of the country where he was likely to be recognifed; he felt that he had no caufe for wifhing to conceal himfelf, but he felt alfo, that he fhould experience an unconquerable embarraffment, fhould he encounter an friend, who might afk him whither he was journeying, or make inquiries relative to his family.

I wardour now he had proceeded many

leagues into the heart of the country. His strength and spirits were equally exhausted; he dismounted from his horse, and having fastened him to the trunk of a tree, whose branches shaded him from the scorching rays of the mid-day sun, he threw himself down by his side.

Reflection, which clears up the point meditated on, wears away the time sorrowfully. But Ferdinand — thus Adalbertus left not from his bed of grief till the sun was far advanced towards the west; after riding three more leagues, a mountain, where he meant to pass the night, presented itself, he dismounted, and was refreshed, — it was the last refreshment, except [illegible] he had drunk at a [illegible] of his hand, that had that day passed his

hips; he ate little, but sparingly, and that without relish. At an early hour he saw his friend hastily bestowed, and betook himself to his chamber, though not to sleep.

CHAP. II.

> ... and then set minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
> And, with some sweet oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,
> That weighs upon the heart.
>
> Macbeth.

The night was spent by him, as the day had been passed, in vain lamentations and conjectures; towards morning he enjoyed a short slumber.

On waking, he perceived his daughter to [illegible] by which he might give a reputable appearance to his visit. She seemed to him [illegible]

trusted to the change of dress and situation, for putting annoyance in the world.

The German power was at that period engaged in a war against Poland, and he resolved to enter himself as a volunteer in one of the regiments which were then daily raising; for this purpose he determined immediately to proceed to Berlin; accordingly, having settled with the host of the miserable inn, he mounted his horse, and set forward.

His journey of the preceding day had been partly in an opposite angle to the high road leading to Berlin: he accordingly struck into a bye path, which was to conduct him to the high road.

With mournful thoughts he proceeded

following along, and gained the desired road about the middle of the day.

Two days served to complete his journey; on the evening of the second he entered the busy city of Berlin; he took up his abode for the night in a small inn, and on the following morning made inquiries for a purchaser for his cloak, with this he had determined to part ere he entered into the service of his country, well aware that his pay would ill suffer him to support it.

He walked about the city, he admired the public edifices, he inquired who had been their founders and builders, and for the last two days, found a sufficient food of amusement to divert his thoughts, at least sometimes, from the sad subject on

which they were too forcibly bent; but as the novelty of the scene began to subside, reflection returned with redoubled perplexities and griefs; — sometimes he wished to return to the cattle: — "My uncle," he said, "my mother avows to be innocent, — why should I fear him? — but still, she enjoins me not to see him: — some secret cause doubtless actuates her conduct, — why hide it from me? — Should she have leagued with him to murder my father!—have taken him to her bed, and driven me from the cattle, that I might not be a witness of her shame!" — The thought went nigh to madden him. "She is not so base," he cried: "would she, had this been so, have supplicated the count on her knees? — it could not have been done to deceive me, for she expected not my return. — What can

[illegible] — for the blood that stained her hand?" Imagination could wander no farther: — "Some secret misery wrings her heart. — I cannot alleviate it, or she would call for my assistance, — and I will not aggravate her calamities by disobeying her commands." He prayed fervently for her happiness, and wafted up his prayers to heaven in a heart-felt sigh.

On the third day after his arrival at Berlin, his landlord found him a purchaser for his lustre at a fair price: Alpenstein hesitated to strike the bargain; he had no friend left on earth; it had endeared him beside to him, and he felt a reluctance to part from the last remains of his late hap-

ge days. He debated in his mind: — what money he possessed would soon be gone, and then —— ! He cast a glance at the road before him, the path was gloomy— "He is yours," he cried; "take him, but use him kindly." He rushed into the house, refusing again to behold his favourite friend. The most needful article was then the last in his thoughts, — he recollected not the money, till the landlord awakened him from his reverie by putting it from his hand upon the table.

His first step was now to offer himself for service, he received the bounty bestowed on a volunteer, and taking the military habit, found it made an alteration in his person which he little expected.

He felt an inexplicable unwillingness

to lead to any discourse which might give him information of the general opinion of the world, if any tale relative to his family was current in it,—but of this he was ignorant: he resolved to drive the subject from his thoughts: it only became the more constant attendant on his solitary moments.

He had been about three months in the service of the empire, when the regiment to which he served, was ordered to march to a village about four leagues out of Berlin, till they should be called into action, for which they were commanded to hold themselves in readiness at a first notice.

In the course of another month they were called to the field. Alphonso was strong, active, and patient of fatigue, so

moral courage; he acquitted himself in the toils of war with the most becoming spirit and fortitude, which [illegible] gained the favour of his commanding officer, and was by him promoted in the regiment.

The name of the commander was Arieno; the Italian name struck Alphonsus; he was serving in the German army, [illegible] his present rank by the favour of the emperor, fought with peculiar bravery in the German cause, and yet he was palpably an Italian.

Arieno became more and more attached to Alphonsus: he showed him his favour on every occasion. Alphonsus even began to be apprehensive that he was discovered.—But he was deceived.

When the army retired into winter [illegible] Ariano urged Alphonfus to paſs the winter with him. Alphonſus accepted the offer with gratitude, and retired with Ariano in the quality, as he ſuppoſed, of an attendant.

His imagination was pleaſurably deceived; Ariano was himſelf the child of ſorrow;—he had perceived by the dejected air, heſitating ſpeech, and penſive mien of Alphonſus, that he was a prey to grief equally with himſelf: ſympathy beſtowed him to regard the young ſtranger,—and the engaging mien of Alphonſus, though his brow was clouded with ſorrow, ſoon won Ariano's heart; and he reſolved to make him his friend and companion.

The habitation of Ariosto was a small retired mansion on the skirts of a village about three leagues east of Frankfort; an old woman, to whom the care of the household had been entrusted during the summer, was the only one of whom the family consisted in addition to the two friends.

Ariosto was a man whose person, on his acquaintance, was little prepossessing; but as the virtues of his heart, which was the seat of every good quality, flowed forth, he rapidly gained the love and esteem of those who had any knowledge of him: his conversation interested whilst it pleased the hearer, and Alphonsus hung with delight on his accents, as he spoke of the vicissitudes of life, the follies of the world, and the

fixibility of hopes placed in a future state.

Many days paſſed, ere Ariens touched on the ſubject which lingered in the heart of Alphonſus; he then thus addreſſed him, —"I think, my young friend, there is ſomething in your manner, together with your knowledge of many abſtruſe ſubjects, that beſpeaks your real rank in life to be far above that in which I firſt knew you."

Alphonſus was ſilent; but his reddening countenance betrayed to Ariens the truth of his obſervation, who then went on — "Some ſecret ſorrow preys upon your heart; impart to me your cauſe of grief. I may have the ability to alleviate your ſorrows; if not, I will ſooth them.

Alphonfus was ſtill ſilent.

"Do you not know me ſufficiently," Ariens continued, "to be well aſſured, that the intereſt I take in your happineſs, and not the gratification of an idle curioſity, renders me thus inquiſitive?"

"Oh, my friend!" cried Alphonſus, taking Ariens's hand, "I owe you more than my gratitude can ever repay:—you are worthy to be truſted with my inmoſt concerns; but I would rather forego the comforts which I enjoy from your kindneſs and converſation, than impart to you the ſecrets of my heart;—indeed, indeed, they muſt be buried in my breaſt."

"Far be it from me to diſtreſs you,"

returned Ariano; "fear not a repetition of thefe words from me."

A long filence enfued

"You are an Italian," faid Alphonfus, breaking filence.

"You are right," faid Ariano; "and marvel, I doubt not, at my ferving under the emperor of thefe dominions."

"I muft confefs, it has often excited my wonder."

"You fhall entertain no [illegible] you ftay a fhort, and I will tell it to you."

"I have no right to expect fuch a communication from you."

"I doubt not but you have good reasons for your secrecy; I wish my duty to be known to the world."

Alphonsus bowed, and Ariosto thus began.

"My father, count Ariosto, was one of the richest noblemen in the state of Venice. His residence, which was situated nearly a league distant from Venice, was magnificent to the extreme; his gardens were extensive and luxuriant, and his grounds studded in elegance and profusion. At an early age he married the daughter of a rich banker of Genoa, whom he had accidentally seen at the carnival. She was an only child, and at her father's death, which happened three

months after her marriage with my father,

" in the course of six years she brought my father four children, three sons and a daughter; my sister was the first born, I was the second son, my brother Stefano was the eldest. At an early age my youngest brother died; at the period from which I date my story, my brother Stefano was in his nineteenth and I in my eighteenth year. Stefano was in his temper haughty, proud, fickle, and very avaricious; his person was well calculated to hide the deformities of his mind; he was the darling of his mother, whom he much resembled in disposition, and she had even destined over her husband,

" In addition to this, when I tell you

that from my childhood my brother flaunted his dislike of me by every means in his power, I have, I think, said enough to convince you, that my life was far from being enviable.

"Not far distant from the mansion of my father, resided a widow lady, Signora Matteo, with her two daughters, their fortunes were small, indeed barely sufficient to support them with any degree of credit; but they possessed a treasure far superior to riches, in their beauty and virtue; the eldest espoused a Venetian cavalier, he married her, and she departed with him into France.

"The youngest, Camilla by name, had given me a wound which it was not in the power of art to heal. Continued

however, that the inferiority of her condition in life to my own, would prove an unconquerable obstacle to my effecting her introduction to the circles of my family. I endeavoured to bury my passion in my own breast; — like my eyes it would, however, sometimes force its way; I even thought Camilla perceived it, and kindled at the feelings. It was one evening, towards the end of summer, that, as I entered the small garden leading to the house of Signora Bartini (for I sometimes ventured to call, and enjoy the conversation of Camilla), my brother came from the house, as he passed me, he exclaimed, 'My visit is just ended in proper time, I perceive;' and passed on laughing.

"I had been so much accustomed to taunts of this kind from my brother, that

I knelt for hours what he said, and entered the house: I found Camilla weeping by the window, and her mother kneeling by her.

"Suspicions of I know not what, unprecedently flashed upon me round to the room of my brother: I tenderly enquired what had disturbed her; her mother quitted the room, and immediately turned the conversation to another subject.

"I could not conceal the contents of my letter, and in a short time took my leave.

"My father, mother, and brother, were all astonished at supper as I passed them.

"'I knew not whether we were to expect the pleasure of your company this evening,' said my mother.

"'Why, madam?'

"'Nay, perhaps you were not invited with Signora Bentivi, and hence may not be too forward.' She laughed loudly, and my brother did the same.

"'I bit my lip with rage, then said, "I could convince my opponents in nothing where my elder brother chose to set the example."

"This stung it to the quick, and upon I said

"My father looked down on me, and

faid. "You had beft beware how you marry contrary to my inclinations;—remember that Camilla Bartini is the laft woman I fhould chooſe for your wife."

"I knew my combat was unequal, and remained ſilent.

"I now found myſelf more diſagreeably ſituated than ever under my father's roof, and accordingly determined to travel: I aſked his permiſſion; he readily granted it, and likewiſe advanced me a handſome ſum of money. His eaſy conſent diſtreſſed me, though I wiſhed to obtain it; affection ſeemed to have no part in his ſtudy a compliance.

"I went to Camilla's houſe; but what was my ſurpriſe to find that ſhe had left

[illegible] he was gone, on a visit to her father at [illegible] —There [illegible] remarkable depression in her conduct; I could not harmonize [illegible] to all. I never [illegible] to explain it to me. I took my leave of her, and the next morning I departed from my father's mansion.

"Ten months elapsed, and I [illegible] from my mother, to inform me that [illegible] in Sicily. In about six weeks after, I received from her a few lines, informing me that my father had paid the debt of nature, and requesting my immediate presence.

"I had no time in reaching Venice, and arrived at my late father's mansion, on the day of his funeral: the will was then opened;

[illegible] conceive, if you can, my astonishment, when the following paragraph was read: 'To my friend and cousin Philip, in consequence of his obedience to my commands, I bequeath only five hundred cechins, that he may know I have not forgotten him, but wish to see him off from all other share of my property.'

[illegible] was a blow to me that at my heart— it benumbed my senses. Manning cursed the villain who had belied me to my father. I felt the murderer darting a look at my brother, which I plainly perceived that he felt.

'I flew to the house of Agnes Bernal. Bernal was dead. Bernal was standing by the door, and informed me, that her mistress was gone to her daughter's in France.

" ' Where does fhe refide ?'

" ' At Montpelier.'

" ' What is the Chevalier — — — who married her daughter ?'

" ' The Chevalier D'Albert.'

" I will not trouble you with my reflections during the time I was returning to Montpelier: fuffice it to fay, that my fufpicions were irrevocably fixed on my brother, as the villain who had taken from me the eftcem of my father

" Arrived at Montpelier, Madame D'Albert received me at the houfe of her husband

"'You will wonder to see me, Madam,' I exclaimed; 'but'——

"At this moment Signora Barton entered the apartment: I started back, for under a fit of her daughter to leave me; I [illegible] —What I had studied to say during my absence, had now fled from my thoughts, and I could only inquire for Camilla.

"'Ah! Signor,' she cried, 'my child [illegible] I hope, but with the dart of death is heavy on her.'

"'Till that moment, I knew not what [illegible]

"I fell from the chair on which I was

fainted—a dead sickness took me, and I was well nigh bloody but Victoria's hands restored me to life.

"When she perceived my senses were returned, she cried, 'Did you then really love my poor girl, Signor?'

"'Love her! oh God, grant me words to prove how tenderly I loved her!'

"'She loved you, but was taught to believe you wedded to another.'

"This was an additional wound to my already lacerated heart.

"She then proceeded to inform me, that, on the evening that I had met my brother coming from her house, and found her

daughters suspect he had been making the basest proposals to my Camilla, and that, having her refusal doubtless served to heighten in his unreasonable mind the belief that Camilla favoured Lionel, he had removed Camilla to her sister's in France, that Camilla, having heard that I had left Mr. Vivian, had supposed that I had forgotten her, and given up herself to melancholy; and that, about two months before my arrival at Montpelier, she had received a letter, as from me, informing her that I was married. 'This,' said Sophia Bevan, 'has driven her to despair; her faculties are impaired, and we hourly await her death as the greatest blessing heaven can bestow on her.'

'The letter was thrown out — it was the handwriting of my villainous brother

"I informed her of the contents of my father's will, relating to me; I showed her how I conceived myself to have been doubly injured by my brother: she sympathized in my fate, and I in hers; our sorrow flowed from the same source.

"In the course of that day, my beloved Camilla breathed her last. How shall I relate my anguish on receiving the direct intelligence? yes, my friend, shall I endeavour what I have not words to describe.

"On the following morning, I was permitted to visit her corpse. Oh, how altered was her once beautiful countenance! Oh, my God, what did I undergo during the ceremony I passed upon her cold remains! In an early of horror, I beheld her in light.—This hand was now mute—it overpowered

me; — I was dragged from her, I know not by what means, never again to behold the innocent and unhappy victim of falsehood, my loved Camilla!

"When her funeral obsequies were performed, I returned to Venice; a short time developed to me the perfidy of my brother; I learnt that he had gained the credit of my father to my marriage with Camilla, by [illegible] police: — how did my heart pant for re- [illegible] give a further check. — I attempted, however, to [illegible] but [illegible] would not to me by my Father, and received [illegible] to leave the Venetian dominions, and having gained [illegible] Germany, I offered myself a volunteer in the service of the

[illegible] — I have [illegible] thirty-two years, and his [illegible] me to the rank I now hold. — My [illegible] possible vision; but I enjoy a treasure which [illegible] by will never know — an approving conscience."

Alphonso thanked him for his [illegible], [illegible] with him to his [illegible], and [illegible] if he had ever heard by letters of his brother since the period of his leaving Venice.

"By accident I heard, about fourteen years ago, that he had married a woman of fortune immediately on his leaving [illegible], that my mother had not long survived her [illegible] of her first infant, which was a female; I heard it by means of an officer who had

visited Venice, and mentioned that the discourse of the city, whilst he was there, had turned lately upon the disappearance of the only daughter of one count Ariomo. "He is an overbearing fellow," said he, "and was [illegible] disposing his daughter to a noble as rich as himself, while the poor girl had fallen [illegible] in love with a German count, whom she had [illegible] at the carnival. Her father forced her to marry the noble, and a short time after the [illegible], and no inquiries could discover whether she had fled."—The name of her lover, I think the officer said, was count C—, [illegible] a descendant of a noble family at Saxony.—"But providence punished his avarice in the [illegible] of his only child."

Alphonso changed colour at the mention of his name; but Ariomo perceived it not, and Agnolati ventured to inquire what

was understood to have been the young lady's fate.

Adrian answered, that he was supposed to have fled with her lover, and eluded the diligence of her father's and husband's search.

Alphonso's brain was now on the rack to [illegible] some part of his father's or uncle's conduct, that might tally with this account; his father had never been a habitual companion [illegible] to have [illegible] of any transgression of the kind, [illegible] had opportunity [illegible] and [illegible] lover his [illegible] by wrong her in the regard she bore him; — his uncle, he recollected, had been much absent from Saxony about the time mentioned by Adrian; but he had several times at intervals returned to his mansion; and no one [illegible]

accompanied him, — there were no others of that name in Germany; — he was conscious it was not his father — that suspicion which on his mother — his own thought was, whether what he had now heard could by any conceivable means account for the death of his father, and the conduct of his murderer, or in any way be supposed to be connected with either. — Here thought again lost itself in a maze of uncertain conjecture.

CHAP. III.

[illegible]

HAMLET.

Previous the turn of taking the field in-stead, Adorni received information from the emperor, that his presence was no longer wanted for the ensuing campaign. Alphonso wished to see his father first; but it was beyond his reach.

In the morning Alphonso and his brave friend set out from the hospitable mansion of the latter; Arieno thanked Alphonso for the pleasure his society had afforded him, and gave him a warm invitation to renew his visit the following winter.

About the middle of the summer, Ariano fell his life in an engagement on the borders of the empire: the receipt of this intelligence went nigh to cost Alphonfus his life. On the very fame day, a fall from his horfe had fractured his fword-arm; and he heard not of the tidings of his friend's death, till ftretched himfelf on the bed of ficknefs.

It was near the end of the campaign, ere Alphonfus recovered from his wound; and in a very fhort time after the re-eftablifhment of his health, a decifive victory was obtained by the Germans over the Poles. This put an end to a long and vigorously fought war: moft of the newly raifed regiments were difbanded, and every meritorious foldier alfo received his difcharge. The weaknefs which ftill remained in Alphonfus's arm, made him unwilling to ftay for his con-

tinuance in the army; and he accordingly determined to seek some other means of subsistence, attended with less danger to his already fractured limb.

After much deliberation, he resolved to sue for employment in the least laborious line, which the then newly-discovered silver mine in Bohemia afforded. His regiment had been disbanded at Prague, and thus he had not far to travel, for the purpose of putting his plan into execution. He was readily hired by the *entrepreneur* for working the mine, and his labour fell short of what he had pictured to himself; it would, indeed, have been much healthy work, [illegible] from what he had inferred when he undertook his employment; and, [illegible] own inability, he had exaggerated in idea the labour of the task he had undertaken.

His fellow-labourers worked hard, and earned their pittance with the sweat of their brows; but it was the more heavily relished by them in their moments of relaxation.

They laughed, they sang, they told tales for each other's diversion; they related anecdotes that had fallen within their knowledge, and their cheerfulness prelated to the relish of labour.

They delighted much to hear Alphonsus recount the deeds of the battle in which he had fought; how amongst them he had served, and to them his narrations were peculiarly interesting, and they ever bid him recapitulate how he had distinguished himself during the campaigns in which they had served.

Alphonso had belonged to the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] relate the events of his life.

[illegible]

A few days after, the lot fell upon a [illegible]

words will tell my tale," he said, and thus began:

"My father and mother, good souls, rented a farm of some Colonburg, in Lower Saxony, near the river Elbe."

Adjustus was all attention.

"Oh, had he lived yet, I should not have been here! but I might have been much worse off: and so I thank the saints that I am here: and may I never fare worse, pray I! — Well, though my father did not come of a great family, a great family came of him; for, boys and girls, he had fifteen of us." — Here a loud laugh applauded the youngster's wit. — He continued — "Well, as I said before, my father rented a farm of

to our Coleenburg; he was very good to the poor, and promised my father he would do something for all his children;—God rest his soul in heaven!—Let me see, I must have worked in that manufactory two years and a half: it was about eight months before that time, that the count went out to hunt for seven days, for aught I know; or it might be only to die our emperor. I can't tell, however, about those such things'—

The following Adventure in the conclusion of this tale, must be oddly conceived.

"So, on the day he was expected home, news was brought to his castle by old Rodolph, who went with him, that he never left them, till killed him on his way home; and he Hubert went back with re-

[illegible] he died. —Well, now comes the most extraordinary part of my story: the good dead count had a son about seventeen or eighteen years of age, a fine comely handsome youth, not [illegible] to my own workings at a time."

[illegible] laughed, and Alphonsus heaved an inward sigh.

"Well, two days after, he was willing, and [illegible] mother of them as he loved, took my love, now the Lilies fly, the good lady [illegible] to a maid, for the loss of her husband; and we [illegible] at what she had done, when she came to herself, that she killed her son — and directly [illegible] a ghost began to make such

every night at twelve o'clock, it still re-
peated in the tenth room, because that is
the time for all of the young counts."

"Well, and did you ever hear it?" cried one of the miners.

"Oh no! no body has gone near the
old tower, it belonged by right to the
count's brother: and he came to it; but he
could only stay two days for he was afraid
of the ghosts that he could not keep his own
ale, and he abandoned all the premises
and locked up the cattle gates; and away
he went, some folks say, out of the country,
and left the ghoft to ring away by itself;
and I fancy it is pretty safe, for having all
the supper the cattle walk can give it to it-
self, for no company will trouble it, I am
sure.—Well, so, for want of the count's

help, my father went down in the world; and so we most of us left him, to seek our own fortunes; and here am I, a jolly miner: — and though ours is a low calling under ground, I fancy it will bear looking into as well as many great men's upon the surface of the earth."

With the youth ended his history: — a volume of applause ran through the assembly, and they parted for the night.

Alphonso slept not: he had now food for unrestrained conjecture — A subject of which he had not heard mentioned during two years' intercourse with the lively world: he had at length heard distinctly a name, which led him to conjecture the story was not an unusual report — "The castle of ——!" — was a bell tolled at midnight?" —

In spirits he had no faith, and what could it avail any human being to live there, retired from the world? nor did he think it possible they could remain there undiscovered.—That his mother was dead, he did not in the least credit; the youth had said the same of him.—He ruminated again and again on what he had heard, but his meditations ended where they had begun.

Some time elapsed ere Alphonso recovered to question the youth relative to what he had related of his family; and the only additional intelligence he could gain was that some people unfolded every thing to be the murderer of his brother, the convict and his son, for the sake of plundering the castle, which devolved by the death of young Alphonso to his family.—"But then, if this was the case," cried the

and leave the world?"

whom she had exculpated.

It was one day shortly after this time, that a gentleman travelling through Bohemia, came, attracted by curiosity, to visit the mine; Alphonsus and another miner happened to conduct him: the gentleman's servant accompanied him: in passing a deep cavity of the mine, over which a narrow plank was laid, the servant's eyes not being directed to the unsteady board over which he was passing, one of his feet slipped, and, unable to recover his balance, he sunk into the space below. The fall was,

to any one, inevitable death: — he was dashed to pieces.

The gentleman, whose name was Lawrence Kandolph, was much affected by the misfortune that had befallen his servant; he had lived with him many years, and had proved himself a faithful attendant.

The baron immediately recovered to the surface of the earth, where the first objects that struck his sight were his own and his friend's horses, tethered to a post at a short distance from the mouth of the cave: a difficulty immediately arose in his mind, how to get the animals he did not ride himself conveyed to the next town; he accordingly ordered Alphonso a liberal payment to ride it thither for him; Alphonso willingly

proud of his proposal, and they mounted, and rode on.

Alphonsus had for some time considered his situation in the same as a disgraceful one; he had entered into it from the same motive from which he had so long continued in it,—horror of poverty. He knew no other mode of procuring a subsistence, in which he could pass unknown, and yet he earnestly wished again to mix in the world, in the hope of gaining some light on the mystery which constantly occupied his mind; accordingly he determined to offer himself to supply the place of the man whom he had just witnessed.

The learned abbot had many questions as to his abilities for filling the office he wished

to undertake, and Alphonsus deemed himself capable of every particular what he had been accustomed formerly to do for himself, he thought it an unbecoming matter to perform for another. There was something in his manner of application that interested the baron in his favour; he accepted the offer made to him by Alphonsus and wrote a few lines to the superintendant of the mine, saying that he would retain Alphonsus in his service.

The baron Kardsfelt was a man about thirty years of age, and possessed, his motions were pleasing and his temper mild, which he exercised towards all he [illegible] or affronted; and then his resentment knew no bounds.

He had at this time been on a visit to [illegible]

his elder, who was married and settled at Rome, and was returning to his own mansion at a short distance from Ingouville, when the accident took place which introduced Alphonsus to his knowledge. — Returned home, Alphonsus was made acquainted with the shame of his father, and resented them much to the satisfaction of his mother, who behaved towards him with great kindness.

Alphonsus frequently visited Ingouville, and never missed an opportunity of finding some subject which he hoped might lead to the restoration of his family, but he never heard the name. He was often a listener to the tales of ghosts and witches to which the common people in that part of the country give much credit, but the castle of Chateauneuf was never spoken of; and he now began to distrust those long and circumstan-

[illegible] of [illegible] mind, for the [illegible] the young [illegible] had related.

The baron was fond of play, though he [illegible] had [illegible] passed much of his time at the gaming-table. Having one day engaged with a stranger in a game at [illegible], his opponent was suddenly called from the room in the midst of the game. The stranger had been much beaten by the baron: he was [illegible] his losses, and, on his return to the room, alleged that the baron had [illegible] his [illegible]. The baron's fiery temper was heated; he rose, drew his sword, and called on his antagonist to defend his assertion: — it proved to the baron a fatal summons, for he received his adversary's weapon in his side.

He was immediately conveyed home,

fainting with loſs of blood, and the wound pronounced to be mortal: ſpeech was re-[illegible] he beckoned Alphonſus to [illegible], and gave him his parole; Alphonſus received it, kiſſed his hand, and retired [illegible]. The baron pulled the [illegible] of his cruelties who stood by him, and pointed to Alphonſus; the friar underſtood that he asked his protection for him, and anſwered it by a ſignificant inclination of the head. [illegible] over the baron expired in great agonies.

Alphonſo gave him to the world for eyes for ever.

[illegible] to the reader to play as [illegible] more.

CHAP. IV.

Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But either it was different in blood,
Or else misgraffed in respect of years,
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,
Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream:
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That in a spleen unfolds both heaven and earth;
And, ere a man hath power to say—"Behold!"
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick, bright things come to confusion.

A Midsummer's Night's Dream.

When the friar had given the necessary orders, and made the proper arrangements for the funeral of the baron, he thus ad-

duced Alphonfus, — "Young man, you feem greatly intereſted in the fate of the baron."

Alphonfus wept bitterly. Every added pang of ſorrow deeply lacerates a grief-worn heart. "I have loſt my only friend!"

"Be not diſpaſſionate," returned the Hiero[illegible] "the Arcanal Baron has recommended you to my notice: — I will find [illegible] reaſon of [illegible] for your future life, be aſſured."

Theſe words were balm to the wounded breaſt of Alphonfus.

"Farewell," continued the holy man: [illegible] the will of heaven to repair your loſs, and be comforted;

I will be here again to-morrow." — So say-
ing he departed.

On the following day Alphonso found himself more composed, and at the appoint-
ed hour father Matthias arrived.

"Good-morrow to thee, youth."

"The same to you, good father."

"You have been much on my thoughts
since we parted. To-day on the pro-
per mind to a young mind should be direct,
particularly to those of no mean. I perceive
the two errors that I would be most cautious
for — I have been endeavouring my mind the
mean, and I think I have found them: I
suppose all is pleasing to the senses
seem to you, above a league from home;

their servitor has been dead about a fortnight, and they have not replaced him:—Should you like to become his successor?"

Alphonso readily accepted the offer; and having flung a farewell sigh over the body of his sad master, the friar undertook to conduct him that evening to the convent, and at the appointed time duly let out together.

The convent of Saint Helena was a large and ancient edifice, its ivy-grown towers imitated in sculpture, and the figures carved on its walls bespoke the fraternities it inclosed.

The friar opened a small door near the chapel, of which he usually carried the key, and introduced Alphonso into an isolated

cloister, which led immediately to the apartments; there a door opened into the hall of the convent: it was spacious, — at the ends were pallets leaning to the walls of the room: and in front, a wide fire-grate, conducting to the upper range of cells. The apartment in which the lady abbess usually sat, opened into the hall: the monk entered it, and bade Alphonso follow him: the abbess was alone; father Ambrose informed her who the stranger was, and the reason of his coming. Some conversation then passed between me and the lady in low voices, after which the father left Alphonso, telling him, that, as he was unprepared with the change of his clothes, one person should accompany and remain with him at the inn the first three or four days and nights; that, after some further conversation on the same business and laboring how to be properly

absent in his office, rang her bell; and the porter attending her summons, she was told that Alphonso came to succeed the late Gerilla, was entered to show him his apartment, and to give him the necessary instructions. Alphonso followed her out of the room.

The porter was about fifty years of age, he was *thin-visaged*, of a rare humour, and an *excellent prattler*. "Come, follow me," said he, as soon as the door was shut; "I'll show you your room in a minute; and a good comfortable one it is.—Oh! how to the tools, young man, how to the coals!" Alphonso looked up, and perceived that he stood near the fire under which they were piled; he observed Bridget, who frowned, but she continued: "Ay, you'll have all to yourself now,—you'll have a

fine, easy, happy life of it. I'll affure you:—let me fee,—veſpers are juſt over; at eight you muſt ring the bell, and prepare the chapel for prayers before going to bed, then again at twelve, for the midnight prayers; then at ſix, for matins; and at ten, for mafs; and at ſix, for veſpers; and that's all you have to do, except helping me to ſweep the chapel, and keeping clean the ornaments; and all the reſt of your time is your own."

They had by this time arrived at the apartment appointed to the uſe of the hermit. "There," ſaid he, pointing upon the door, "you'll live like a prince; Father Martin's cell is the beſt of any, and ſtands alone;"—pointing to the other ſide:—"and that," opening a door facing them, "is your way into the chapel;

and you must take care that those papers on the altar never go out; and when they are nearly short come to me for some more; and now I think I have told you all, so you may come and be with me till evening prayers if you like to." She proceeded, and he followed her into her apartment.

Perdita had yet a little care for the world, though the last man alive were removed from it, and was repelled to hear much more of it than for new acquaintance; but objecting not the world might have now with its presidings her wishes: she thought a regent proved from reserve and modesty, as being with strangers, and moreover began to fit him the examples of commendations, by relating to him various occasions of the state, as full, overpassing herself, — "I have," said she, "the land

is not out, go, and ring the chapel bell.—Oh, here! but fray, flay, put on your surplice, — it is rather too tight round the neck, but we'll get you a new one; — come."

She proceeded into the chapel, and Alphonsus, according to her directions, tolled a certain number of strokes on the bell. "Now follow me," the nun cried, and Alphonsus obeyed: — they quitted the chapel. "Here is the door the nuns come in; now you must take that button of holy water, and hold it for them as they enter, cross them on the forehead, and keep them from the influence of the devil while they are at prayers. I'll light the candles on the altar for you, but you must do all yourself another time."

The nuns entered one by one, and observe-

up their veils as they approached the hallowed ground, dipped each a finger in the vase which Alphonsus held. As soon as the nuns were all come in, the portress beckoned Alphonsus to follow her once more; they walked behind the altar, and she instructed him that he must now assist Father Matthias in putting on his sacerdotal robes. Prayers were then chanted by the friar: the nuns blessed him, and having sung an evening hymn, received his benediction, and retired to their cells.

Alphonsus then, according to the directions of the portress, put out all candles, save the two seven-to-be-extinguished lights; and having locked the chapel doors, again accompanied Father Matthias to his apartment, where they tarried in a few time. "Come," said he, "Father Matthias is in bed: you

must go on." So saying, he gave him a heavy and extended form to his shoulder [illegible] by the "Good night, remember eleven o'clock at twelve."

Alphonso [illegible] being found negligent in his office on the first trial, and very often [illegible] on the bed, Peredur's head [illegible] however, [illegible] that he had done right well; nevertheless as a few minutes [illegible] the twelve, some of his shoulder [illegible] and warned him it was time to ring the bell.

The [illegible] were replaced as before, and Alphonso [illegible] to [illegible] and also receive [illegible] however, buttered into me to [illegible] and when he found Peredur again [illegible]

and sat very by at the chamber door. Morton was alarmed, and the very argument as before. "Now," said Perilla, "we need not go to bed any more, it is one day to-morrow." She then showed him what was required of him to perform, and intended to abate her own employment.

Alphonso was as much pleased with his business as any time of life could, in his present state of mind, have rendered him; it afforded him thence hopes a great deal, and he was satisfied. Custom quickly reconciled him to the hours of rising; and he even, in a short time, found little need to conclude an hour-glass with which Perilla had presented him. The abbess was pleased with his conduct. Father Marcos paid him much attention; he discovered his mind to be in-

formed above his rank in life: he hastened his footsteps to Alphonso, who comforted their mirth, but silently declared the theme he wished to maintain. The lady gaily encountered his hint; he supplied him with books to enrich his leisure hours, and, when his avocation permitted it, gave him his own society.

In the convent of Saint Ursula were twenty-six nuns and one lay-sister; amongst the latter there was one named Louisa, whose beautifully pensive countenance never failed to attract the eyes of Alphonso, as he beheld the veil of unbleached white. Had he known what love was, he would have felt that the lay-sister with the rich patience of her appearance gladdened his heart, and her departure from the chapel made him sad with for the hour of her return.

Almost six months after Alphonsus had become an inmate of the convent, as he was one day conversing familiarly with Father Marcus, he perceived an unusual concourse of the people towards the church, and on enquiring what was the occasion, he was told that a female penitent was about to receive the veil. "Let us go," said the holy man, "to the fair object and myself am always enraptured with the history of her birth; for as I think, from many circumstances of your conduct that have fallen under my eye, I may venture to call you with her story, you shall hear it."

Alphonsus bowed acknowledgement for the compliment paid him by the holy man, who thus began: —

"It is now full fifteen years, since one wet and stormy evening towards the end of December, a fair knock, never repeated at

a short space of time, called the portals at the gate of the convent; a soft voice answered further from the thorn, and mentioned the name of our lady abbess: the portals opened the gate, and a female figure, a youth as she imagined, clad in the habit of a pilgrim, entered, leaning on a staff, the portals closed the gate, and having conducted the dappled youth into the apartment of the abbess, he thought suddenly uttered, 'Oh! pound a suffering woman!' at the look at the feet of the lady abbess.

"Enchanted by fortune, and fascinated by the keenness of the glance, she thought she with difficulty removed from the kneeling to one which she had taken that hour upon the drank a cup of delicious cordial administered to her by the abbess, and a flood of tears proceeding from the joy she felt, on the

stillness given her of experiencing that asylum for which she sighed, called her full heart. After eating sparingly of the meal that had been set before her, she begged leave to retire to rest, unable to explain that night the mystery which accompanied her arrival in a male habit.

On the following day she was much recovered from her fatigue, and her entreaties were carefully made to the abbess not to deliver her up to any one who might demand her.

The abbess promised her the full protection of the church: and perceiving that she was still much agitated, forbore to put to her any inquiries.

In a few days she was much troubled, but

a deep melancholy, at times approaching to frenzy, clouded her mind, notwithstanding the countenance of the holy Abbess and zealous her affections; the attendants [illegible] declared to dwell on her former sweet words [illegible] fatherless, and confirmed me more [illegible] to you discretion not to reveal it out of the convent; permit a visit [illegible] and pray for the sick sister, Velina."

Alphonso pondered deep [illegible], and tearing the manuscript from the hand of the friar, retired with it to his own apartment.

LAURETTA'S STORY.

"My name is Lauretta. I am the only daughter of count Arsent, [illegible] and Ve-

nary, my mother died on the same day on which I was born; I had a fortune equal to my birth, and many were the suitors for my hand, none of whom I believe were moved by aught than by any attachment to my person: at length, chance threw in my way count Frederic Cudenburg, a noble Saxon by birth, whom, were I to describe him to you as my burning fancy now paints him to my eyes, you would conceive to have far passed his sex beyond the limits nature has prescribed; suffice it to say, I thought him all perfection.

In fact, I vainly imagined that the devotion I paid him, proceeded only from my sudden conviction of his merits; and so far from being singular in my attention to him, I should have been an exception to the female sex whom I esteemed, not to have

treated him as I did. But alas! I soon found that my regard proceeded from a softer motive, and I quickly perceived that I adored what others too approved.

"The infancy of love is too sweet to be easily shaken off:—at that delightful period, how little are we aware of the many anxious moments its maturity brings upon us!—fatal enchantment! how severe a struggle hast thou proved to me through life!

"A mutual affection glowed in our congenial breasts; I listened to his vows with rapture, and he heard my protestations of constancy with equal delight.

"But my obstacles to which the eyes of lovers are seldom equal placed a hedge of thorns amidst the path which I vainly

imagined was conducting me to the summit of earthly happiness.

"The only wealth which true love looks for, is an ardent return of affection: in that no one was more rich than my Frederic;—my father, who weighed merit only by wealth, had destined me for the wife of count Dyroff, a nobleman of immense property, at that time on his travels; and he recommended me to check a passion grown too prepotent with my blood to hope a cure; nor did I endeavour to find it; I would sooner have given up life, than to have lived and ceased to love my Frederic. His visits were now prohibited, on pain of my being immediately sent to a convent, if he was again seen with me.—How unhappily did I then find that the horrors of love are more prevalent than its sweets! Still had I not re-

fidation to shake off my caste of sorrow.—If the idea for a moment entered my heated brain, it was outweighed by the consideration that the uncertain wheel of fortune might one day turn in my favour, and give me to enjoy my Frederic's love without alloy.

"At length I contrived by stealth to meet him in the garden of my father's villa:—how did the sight of him rekindle the smothered flame!—I again vowed fidelity to him, and imprecated heavy curses on myself, if ever I swerved from the oath I had taken to be his only, and for ever.

"Not long after this, I was one day sitting alone in my chamber, ruminating on my hard fate, and bewailing with my tears a lover I had privately received from whom

Frederic, replete with vows, which, though often repeated, were ſtill new and dear to me, when my father entered the apartment, and informed me that count Byroff was returned to Venice.—How ſhall I deſcribe to you the pangs that at that moment rent my heart?—how relate to you the tide of grief which burſt its way through my ſwollen eyes?—But I will leave it to be pictured in your intereſtable breaſt.

"I had not the fulneſs of my heart ſealed up by the too certain knowledge of my fortune having proceeded from a mouth whence there was no appeal, would have prevented my giving utterance to ineffectual remonſtrances.

"In the evening of that day, my deſtined huſband waited on my father;—I was

hummed to appear; — he rose and took my hand as I entered the apartment, and my eyes upon the ground. I could not bear to encounter those of a man whom I considered as the bane of my future peace — I must, however, in justice to him, say, that, save only one, I never knew a man better calculated to make a woman happy: his address was easy and elegant, his manners conciliating; his person handsome, and his mind well stored with polite and useful learning. He was a man that, had he been my brother, I could have revered: him as it was, in spite of me, I respected him; but with how widely different a passion did he wish to inspire me! and in how mild, how gentle terms did he complain of that coldness with which I treated him! — for did his noble lyher was upon me, that many times I formed the determination of disclo-

ing to him the final fiend of my heart, and ratifying his pity. — Oh, ye powers! why did ye not whisper to my labouring breast the many hours of anguish this confession would have spared me, and the horrid deed that then had never been committed?

At length the day I long had dreaded was fixed upon, and notice was given me the preceding evening, that I was, on the morning of the following day, to accompany count Heydt to the altar. — I fell at my father's feet, and, clasping his knees, conjured him to have pity on me; I endeavoured by the arguments of reason to convince him of the impropriety and cruelty of his commands: I besought him not to harden his heart against the entreaties of an only child, I represented to him the miseries of connection my future misery would occasion

him, when he considered that he alone had brought it upon me. But his ear was deaf to every voice save that of interest, and calling me from him, he exclaimed, 'Obey my commands, or cease to be my daughter!' and, with a frown that pierced me to the heart, left the apartment. — Exhausted with weeping, I sunk into a fainting fit, which lasted some hours: as soon as my strength began to return, I took my woman, and, leaning on her arm, repaired to my aunt's, where I had before met Frederic, I informed her of all that had happened — for sympathised in my distress, but being entirely dependent on my father, dared not exert herself in my behalf. I entreated her to send a letter to Frederic: she did so. — After two hours passed in tedious expectation, the messenger returned and informed us that he was not in Venice; he had been called from t

have days on urgent business, but was shortly expected to return.

"My man promised to send early in the morning, to inquire whether he was arrived, and if he was, to let me know immediately.

"I returned home like a malefactor, who, knowing his doom to be inevitable, makes an ordinance when led to the stake.

"Entering my father's house, I pulled quickly to my chamber, and throwing myself upon a couch, I again gave birth vent to my tears.—My woman was alarmed at my distress; she had been my confidant ever since the death of my mother; she loved, and endeavoured to comfort me: but alas! how vain were her efforts! she could only recommend resignation, where it was

no virtue, and teach me to hope for that interpolation of providence, which it refused to grant me.

"When I became somewhat composed, I began to reason with myself.—'Shall I,' said I, 'quit my father's house, and fly to Frederic?—surely he will receive me with joy, with rapture!'—I reflected a moment; I had been told that vows were false, inconstant, and cruel; that those they protested to love in prosperity, were disregarded by them in adversity.—'Surely,' cried I, 'Frederic is not one of these!—oh no! your promises have been made to me!—your sacred vows of fidelity have been uttered!—I will fly to him; he will receive me with transport!'—I sprang from the couch in a frenzy, and walked wildly about the chamber; when, as my

reflection! I at that instant remembered somewhere to have read, I knew not where, that lovers' vows are made only to be broken.—'Oh heavens!' thought Frederic, think thus,' I exclaimed; 'for who that has ever loved, but has sighed and sworn as he has done?—And shall I then throw myself upon him, to be accounted a burthen by him? perhaps upbraided for my love?—Oh credulity! bane of our sex! why have I so long been thy dupe?'—In a brain harassed as mine then was, any idea, however romantic, is easily admitted; and, half frantic, I bade the faithful youth with every objection my sick heart suggested.

"I fear you will upbraid me with inconstancy, caprice, and cowardice of mind; I would to you, I could to them the re-

proach; but the torture of mind I then endured, may well apologize for my strange, and seemingly ungrateful, conduct.

"The thought of my lover's infidelity once admitted, I became more calm. I considered that if the vows of love were disregarded by those who were not compelled to break them, how innocent should I be, whom my relations had conspired to force into it! — I even became in part reconciled to my approaching marriage. — You will marvel at my words, — but give yourself up to my narration; convince him [illegible] the distracting thoughts of being abandoned [illegible] by the man to whom [illegible] affection; call friendless upon an unpitying and prejudiced world: and the idea of giving your hand to a man whom you [illegible]

ready began to esteem, will not appear in so dark colours as you may perhaps have drawn it.

"I did not retire to rest that night: early in the morning, my aunt sent to inform me that Frederic was not returned. 'It is well!' I cried; 'no sure he has forgotten me. Oh cruel, cruel Frederic! are these thy vows? is this thy boasted constancy?' All the pleasing scenes of future bliss I had once vainly flattered myself I should enjoy with my Frederic, now recurred to my imagination; and, in spite of my efforts to restrain them, a flood of tears again burst from me. I continued weeping till my father entered my chamber, and summoned me to attend count Rynulf to the altar. 'To be for ever parted from my Frederic!' returned my heart. All my resolution again failed

me, and I should have sunk senseless at my father's feet, had not the voice of count Rysouf, inquiring for me in the tenderest accents, met my ear, and roused me from my lethargy of grief. He took my hand within his — it trembled excessively — he mistook the reluctance with which I suffered him to take it, for virgin bashfulness, and encouraged me with the most soothing expressions of affection. — We entered the chapel, and I returned from it a wife.

" My dream once more, my heart seemed lightened of a heavy weight of misery, and I considered it as vain to afflict myself concerning a futurity which was now irrevocably fixed.

" The day was spent in fulness, and I confirmed myself in opinion that the

awe in which I stood of my father caused me to wear a smile on my lips, whilst I could not forbear heaving a sigh unheard for Frederic.

"Innumerable were the gifts made me on that day by all my relations: count Byroff presented me with jewels to a vast amount, and many articles of dress not less costly in their kind: even my father's natural parsimony seemed relaxed; for he bestowed on me a valuable string of pearls, the only ornament I now possess, and which, notwithstanding his unrelenting cruelty, I still hold dear and sacred, in memory of him who gave it.

"Never did woman pass a less joyful bridal day than myself: when the bustle of festivity was subsided, and night upon

brought opportunity for reflection, I strongly felt that my love for Frederic had lost no ground in my heart.

"In the morning, my kind aunt visited me: I inquired eagerly after count Frederic;—he was not returned.

"In spite of my exertions to appear lively, I was depressed: count Byroff left us means united to amuse, and render me cheerful. My father, who well knew the cause of my melancholy, let me the last opportunity slip of warning me to beware of raising his anger to a higher pitch than I already had done.

"About a month after my marriage, my most cruel wishes were accomplished; my aunt informed me, that I re-

Herie was returned, and half frantic at the intelligence she had given him. My father was luckily from home;—I immediately flew to my aunt's, where I once again beheld my only love. But oh! never was the parting of the most faithful lovers, doomed to weep away a sad and solitary life within monastic walls, more truly affecting than our meeting: my ardent lover gazed at me with a look of sorrow, that penetrated to my inmost soul: my heart shed tears of blood, and, in an agony of grief, I fainted in his arms. On recovering my senses, I entreated him to forgive the rash act into which I had been hurried by the threats of a cruel father, and the vain dictates of my own heated mind: I besought him to pity me; nay, even more, to love me. Yes, I charged him to love me still, as I still loved him. His oath, I believed you, unavailing

the meaning of theſe words, nor ſuppoſe me now a penitent for a crime which, the Supreme of all is witneſs, was far from my thoughts. my fate, cruel and relentleſs as they have been, were however ſatisfied with the reſignation of my peace, and ſpared me the additional ſacrifice of my virtue.

"Oh, Frederic! if ſome bright ſtar thou reigneſt on high in yon exalted firmament, Look down upon thy faithful Laurette, faithful to thee, even in death, and witneſs for me the purity of a heart burnt up by love's devouring fire, yet never ſwerving from the rules of faireſt virtue!

"I continued for ſome time conſtantly to meet Frederic at the houſe of my huſband's aunt, until ſome circumſtances, however trivial in themſelves, contrived to ac-

form me that our meetings were discovered. I accordingly forebore to see him; and wrote to him, telling him my reason for absenting myself from my aunt's. A daily correspondence was now commenced between us, which, except that I saw not my Frederic, accounted to the same as if we had met; as, at our interviews, we had only uttered those lamentations, vows, and promises of fidelity, which were now conveyed in our letters. A faithful servant of my aunt's had the care of receiving and delivering them.

" About a fortnight after the commencement of our correspondence, I learned that my father and my husband were going a short journey, and would not return for two days. On the morning of the day on which my husband had told me they intended to set out, I dispatched a letter by our trusty

meſſenger to Frederic, informing him of their intended abſence, and that I would that evening meet him at my aunt's.

" In the afternoon my father and count Byroff bade me farewell, mounted their horſes, and ſet out. In about two hours after their departure, I ventured to my aunt's; I informed her how things were circumſtanced; ſhe congratulated me on my pleaſing proſpect of ſeeing my Frederic, and then inquired for her ſervant, in order to learn whether he had found Frederic at home; but our meſſenger was not returned.

Three hours were paſſed in anxious expectation and vain forebodings; neither Frederic nor the ſervant appeared. The only concluſion I could draw, was, that Frederic was not in the city, and that our meſſenger

was gone in search of him. But a short interval convinced me of the horrible reverse. Oh! picture to yourself my disappointment, my astonishment, my grief, when, hearing footsteps on the stairs, my aunt opened the door of the apartment, and my father entered it—I uttered a violent shriek, and fainted at my aunt's feet; when I recovered, I found myself on my own bed. 'Oh, Frederic! are you then left for ever?' I exclaimed; for the first idea which flashed across my burning brain on my recovering my senses, was, that the sword of count Byroff had pierced the heart of my Frederic. How I got this hasty groan, I am at this moment ignorant; [illegible] it was but one cry, and I instantly [illegible]. My husband was sitting by my bed-side; I upbraided him for his unfeeling cruelty in the most vehement manner, [illegible] by my excessive grief:

I laid before him all the history of my love for count Frederic; I wept, I sighed, fainted, and upbraided him by turns.

"He informed me that my father had told him, that he suspected I entertained a connection with another man; which fact he had at first endeavoured to confute; but my father persisting in it, he had agreed to assist him in making an attempt at the discovery of the truth; that they had proceeded to be going on a journey, under the expectation of my then returning Frederic into my father's hands; but that, on the morning of that very day, my father had fulfilled our faithful meetings, and thus betrayed my lover to Frederic, inviting him to come in at the opening of that day at my window; that, having entered the room as they had found means of conveying my letter to him, he

whom it was addressed; and having way-laid him in an obscure street through which they well knew he must unavoidably pass in his way to my aunt's, count Byroff had stabbed him. God alone knows what were my feelings during this recital; and thanks be to him, that the fulness of my heart sealed my lips, or I, in frantic rage, had curled the author of my being.

"Count Byroff entreated me to be composed; he represented to me, that my sorrow was now ineffectual, since the deed, which he himself avowed to have been rash, was committed. He set before me the resignation I owed to the will of a father, and endeavoured to work upon me, by the shame I should incur in the opinion of the world, if my conduct became publicly known. But I heeded not what he said; I labored with

disdain to words uttered by the murderer of my Frederic. At that moment, I should have scorned the words of an angel, had they been incapable of recalling my Frederic to life.

« I absolutely refused all nourishment and repose : count Rymil became alarmed for my health ; he continued with great earnestness to urge me to sustenance ; made me the most tender protestations of his love, besought my forgiveness, and prayed me to tell him how he could earn my regards.

« I was silent, and count Rymil left my apartment : he had not been long gone, ere I communicated my fatal secret to the only person about me in whom I could confide, and who had been the companion of my flight—to go and inform my father and my husband, that I had fallen into a fatal slumber, and was

them against entering my apartment, lest they should disturb me. Against her return, I had thrown on a long cloak and veil; and, having bribed her to keep my secret, I left the house unobserved. It was about nine o'clock in the evening when I first went: I moved towards the suburbs of the city as quickly as I was able: arrived there, I entered a narrow lane, in which I imagined I recollected the shop of a tinman. I walked down in search of it: to my great joy, I soon found it, and entering, I perceived there to be no one in the shop but an old woman. In my usual language, interwoven with French, I told the woman I was journeying to Lorette, and wanted the habit of a male pilgrim. She immediately produced several: I purchased one, together with a staff and leathern bottle, and, having tied up my bundle, I left the shop, inwardly rejoicing

that the old woman had been too busily occupied in praising the quality of her goods, particularly to notice me. I again set forward, and in a few minutes arrived at the great road leading from the city.

"Fortunately for me, the village women served to show me my way; and being arrived nearly half a league from the city, and perceiving no one near me, I resumed my exchange my garments for the pedlar's habit; and having buried my clothes I had taken off under a bed, which I had with difficulty managed to get my way for the purpose of hiding them under it, I once more set forward, immediately to journey to the convent, which I had heard my aunt mention, and where I had resolved, if you were so kind as to protect me, to pass the remainder of my days.

"Under favour of my habit, I travelled hither perfectly to my satisfaction, except the inconvenience I suffered from fatigue; but your benevolence and care have brought me to the happy state in which I now find myself: and I trust I shall never prove ungrateful in my acknowledgments to you, and in prayers to the holy saint in whom you confide, to reward you for the humanity you have shown me."

Here was a part of the mystery, relative to the conduct of the uncle of Alphonsio, cleared up: young Pedario had loved and been beloved by the niece of his much revered friend Arsenio; she thought him dead, and lived and died secluded from the world, mourning his loss. "Wisdom woman! oh rare fame angel," cried he moved by the affecting narration of Laurena's exploits for

" had whispered to thee the falsity of that tale which drove thee forever from thy Frederic and the world!—Her lofs was furely the caufe of the grief which vifibly preyed upon my uncle's heart!—Still this folves not the myftery in which I am concerned."—He fat a few minutes wrapped in profound thought, then returned to Father Matthias's apartment.

" Well!" cried the holy man,—" I perceive you feel what you have read;—you pity the unhappy fufferer?"

" Sincerely I do.—Her Frederic was five years fince alive."

" Moreover," refumed the old man, " unlefs you tell me, I fhall not know what you know concerning him."

"Indeed — I cannot now: — the time may come." — He paused.

The father looked disappointed; in a moment he regained his wonted serenity of countenance. "She died," cried he, "as she lived, lamenting the untimely fate of him she loved."

"How long have her cares been ended?"

"Grief wafted her frame to a skeleton, and she has sunk into the grave, now seven years."

"Were any inquiries ever made relative to her?"

"Never."

"But the mentorious making of her child, nor have you spoken to me of her."

"When she delivered to us the manuscript I put into your hands, she knew not herself that she was about to become a mother.—While years [illegible] she declared her passion to the world, and called on heaven to witness that it was the pure offspring of her marriage with count Byroff.—Her sufferings moved the elders, and she prevailed to conceive of her passion, and preserve her child. At the due period of time, she gave birth to a female infant, which [illegible] was to her great joy, for had its sex proved [illegible] ed from her at an early age."

[illegible]

a life of seclusion from the world!" asked Alphonsus.

"Her mother," answered the friar, "on her death-bed, ordained, that, should any part of her family by any means gain the knowledge of her having borne a child, and demand it of the abbess, it was to be delivered up to them; but in case of her remaining here unknown until her eighteenth year, the time at that period to take the veil, as it was not likely that even the world would then be remembered by them after so many years' absence; and on no account to inform her relations that a child of hers was in existence; dreading, as the friar, that they should think it incumbent on them to take home the child, and either shorten the misery of its birth, or, in revenge for its mother's misfortunes, rid it entirely."

"Of what age is Laurette?" asked Alphonsus.

"She has about four months attained her fourteenth year," returned the old man; "and I trust both her father, and court Avarice, are ignorant that such an angel is in existence.—She has been early acquainted with her own fancy by her mother: but the colours in which her parent painted to her her wayward relatives, have led her to wish to enter upon a world which she has never known, and of which she has formed to herself perpetual fancies: she declares herself perfectly happy within these walls, and prepared to take the veil."

Alphonsus sighed, his eyes fell on the drapping urn, and it admonished him to ring the evening bell.

CHAP. V.

——————— a matchless pair,
With equal virtue formed and equal grace,
The same distinguish'd by the joys above!
Here the mild lustre of the charming wife,
Assiduous, tender, o'er the day,

THOMSON.

THE thoughts of Alphonsus were continually fixed on Laurena; he every day felt a stronger predilection in her favour; he began to perceive the nature of his regard for her, and wished to banish her from the sight and gloom of a monastic life:—he longed to inspire in her the sentiments with which she had inspired him; all intercourse with the females of the convent, save the holy abbess, and old Matilda, was denied him;—

what means could he pursue to communicate to her his affection, or how did he know she would not disregard, may perhaps despise him for the confession?

He resolved steadfastly to fix his eyes on hers as she entered the chapel: he was perfectly ignorant that love has a language of the eyes; but he conceived that the eyes might be made to express what passes in the heart.

He timed on the communion his head presenting eyes the blush of modesty overshadowed her cheeks; she cast her eyes to the ground, and proceeded slowly along.

He was unacquainted with the law, and knew not yet to distinguish between obedience and displeasure.

He repeated his experiment frequently: sometimes it was returned in the same manner as on his first trial: mostly she raised not her eyes higher than the veil, and immediately drop'ped them again.

"No" — cried he — "Lauretta feels no sentiment congenial with mine; she even meets my looks of love with indifference. — Unhappy Alphonsus!"

The next time he entered the chapel, he wished not to raise his eyes to hers: a broken sigh burst from his heart. Lauretta heard it. Alphonsus heard the sound, — it tingled on his heart.

He ventured once more to meet her blue eyes: he imagined a faint blush o'spread her

cheeks, and a soft smile stole over her countenance.

It was a confirmation of Alphonso's most exalted hope. "She sees, and is not insensible to my fondest wishes!" he exclaimed. "Oh extasy incomparable!"

How light a breath turns the wavering balance of a lover's hopes and fears!

Teraldi, in new and hot eyes; his diffidence gradually wore off, and she encountered his fond glances with delight.

A method of conveying with her own accord her mind. He wrote to her the fondest declarations of love, that the desire of his return could induce her to hold his letter by the side of the wall, and as she

her finger to touch the water, he slid the paper unobserved into her hand.

Three days elapsed ere he was released from the tyranny of Infante; on the third, at evening prayers, she put a note into his hand, containing these words, — "Oh, Alphonso, what a conviction of the state of my own heart has the declaration of your passion to me! — Oh, let it remain a secret to all besides ourselves! — Be cautious how you write to me again, — we shall be inspected!"

Alphonso was truly happy for the first time; but quite still cool, and brought down to reflection. It told him that he might never be more closely connected with Laureta than at that moment.

About five months after this time, the lady abbess was seized with a violent illness. The friar, who was also the administerer of physic in the convent, was an unceasing attendant at her bed-side: in a few days she died, lamented by all the convent, and particularly by Laurena, to whom she had been a second mother.

Her corpse was placed in its coffin, before the altar of the church; masses were performed three times each day for nine days successively, for the benefit of her soul: and three nuns and a novice alternately watched over the body for the same space of time.

Alphonso thinking an opportunity might now be given him for performing [illegible] with a heart, every way, [illegible] as was the orphan of his deceased master,

beloved Frederic, and entreating her to agree to leave the convent with him on the first opportunity that should offer, — calling on heaven to witness the fanctity of his intentions.

On the evening of the fourth day, Laurena was returning from her duty of watching the bodies as Alphonfus was entering the chapel: she followed the nuns, — they had turned the angle of the chapel door, and Laurena was in the door-way when Alphonfus met her. He caft a hafty look round, — faw no obferving eye, — fnatched her hand, — imprinted on it a fervent kifs, and put into it the letter. — The whole was the tranfaction of a moment.

The funeral obfequies of the nun's were performed at the ufual time, with all the

pomp of religion and superstition, requiems were chanted the whole night by the friar, and all the nuns and novices. It was morning ere they left the chapel, they were fatigued by their nocturnal worship, they rejoiced when it was ended, and retired hastily from the chapel. Lauretta contrived to be the last; she dropped a piece of paper; Alphonsus saw and hid it in his bosom.

"Explain to me, whither thou would'st fly."

He read it,—kissed it,—read it again and tore it.

After much deliberation how to act, when they again to write to his beloved Lauretta and inform her of the particulars of his intended flight, he only urge her to fly with

him from the convent, he resolved to impart the whole of his history to father Matthias.

Accordingly he waited with impatience an hour when the old man was alone; and having entered his apartment, he hesitatingly informed him that he had a tale of confidence to impart to him, — which the holy man kindly permitted to issue from its own breast. Alphonso then related to him every event that had occurred to that hour his entrance into life. Having ended the narrative, — "Now, good father," he cried, "could thou solve the mystery that preys upon my breast?"

[illegible] upon his knees, resting his [illegible] and marking his breast with the sign of the cross, he said, "Heaven forbid I should re-

cafe any one unjuftly! what I am about to fay, is folely conjecture. Thy mother was frantic with grief, and had refolved on fuicide."

Agnefia fhuddered at the idea: after a pauſe, ſhe faid, "But, father, her hand was bloody!"

The father paufed an inſtant, then faid, "She had prayed, in a moment of phrenſy, the inſtrument ſhe had deſigned for her deſtruction."

"Why did thy hand not ſtrike her?"

"Doubtleſs," returned the friar, "the horrible fate ſhe dreamt that would follow the act, for ever kept me from it; and ſtarted it would deſcend on her innocent ſon."

"Do you then happen to the first audible circulation of any music, which he afterwards recalled?"

"I do."

"Was father ever [illegible] the castle of Cohenburg?"

"His word is upon so [illegible] and the remembrance of one who had so [illegible] indebted, rendered it unpleasant, and to [illegible] turned to his own [illegible]."

"But why has he never inquired after me?"

"His inquiries may have [illegible] you."

"Your [illegible]," cried Alphonso,

"are good: you consider circumstances, you know the nature of mankind: they may be just; but a heart, handled as mine has been, pants for certainty."

"It will be difficult to attain it."

"Within these walls, I grant it."

"You do not wish to leave them?"

The hesitating silence of Alphonsus spoke for him in the affirmative.

"Your uncle, and the castle of Colombourg," continued the friar, "are bequeathed to you by your mother."

"But lands," interrupted Alphonsus, "it

y not disobedience to act in opposition to the commands of a frantic parent?"

"You jolt new Abigail, Alphonso, and with reason, that my words could only proceed from conjecture."

Alphonso felt the force of the first remark. The tears started in his eyes, and he exclaimed, "Oh! father! I cannot take leave of mine till I gain some light on this mystery.—I am so unfit indeed for the offices of religion,—my thoughts are too much centred in the world."

"How can you gain information but by visiting the cottage?—and then how know you that your pains might not prove fruitless?"

"No! I would only ever visit the world,

the possibility of hearing what I so earnestly desire would keep hope alive: here I am buried, and I have no pleasing thought to chear me."

"Whither would you go?"

"I have resolved to become a villager on the banks of the Inn."

"The solitude in which you will there live, will soon cure you of every the happy flation you wish to relinquish."

"I feel I was born for solitude, not to live with man alone, but to enjoy the tenderings of the softer sex."

"Beware of your choice."

"I would have you approve it."

"I am excluded from the world."

"But you intimately know her on whom I doat."

"Oh, shame! shame! Nurtured within our convent walls, art thou the man to wish to break their sacred laws?"

"Lavinia Byroff is not bound by them."

"Have you ever conversed with her?"

"Never."

"How then can you tell her feelings are congenial with yours?"

"Be assured they are."

"I have promised her dying mother, that to no one, but her near relations, I will deliver her."

"And should you then hesitate to deliver her to me?"

"You are not allied to her in blood."

"It is in your power to let all consanguinity a degree below me."

"Explain thyself."

"Make me her nearest relative,—your [illegible] fulfilled, and I am [illegible]."

Father Matthias paused while [illegible]

said, "What would the world say, should it ever be known that the descendents of your two noble families were living in the obscure and humiliating situation you have mentioned?"

"Oh, father! what have those whom the world has so hardly dealt with, to do with its censure? — I am well convinced that happiness is not confined to an elevated situation in life."

"Nor," returned the old man, "is it always to be found in an humble state, answerable to the expectations of a warm lover." Father Matthias again paused, then added, "Have you explained your fortune to Lauretta?"

"No."

"Declare them to her."

"But how, good father! — what are your means."

"This night I will conduct her to my apartment, there [illegible] her — by the exercise of [illegible] (and I will pray that heaven guide my tongue for her own [illegible]), I will not [illegible] to render [illegible] — But you [illegible] the [illegible] — I see [illegible] — I have an interest in your fates; and what is done must be concluded ere the arrival of our newly-chosen abbefs."

Alphonfus kiffed the friar's hand, and he made a fign to him to leave him.

When evening prayers were ended, and Perilla was retired to bed, father Matthias stole softly to the cell of Lauretta, and told her to follow him to his apartment. She was reading, but having laid down her book, and taken up her lamp, she drew down her veil and followed him. He stopped at the door of Alphonso's apartment, and pointed to Lauretta to enter: but she did so, and in a few minutes Alphonso was at her feet.

Joy and surprise made her hesitate to determine whether what she saw was a vision, or him she really wished it to be.

The first emotions, on the part of Alphonso, were given up to exult; but he recollected that the more pleasure he had

front, and that he had much to communicate. He accordingly began by imparting to her the indulgence of the good confessor, proceeded to the narration of his own life, and, lastly, recounted the plan he had formed for their mutual happiness, if she deigned to share it with him.

Her eyes spoke the ransom that virgin bashfulness prevented her tongue from uttering—the blush!—he read the fond word—the flutter of the rose-bloom'd fan for the confirmation—the pulsation of [illegible] being opposed to [illegible] worked as the [illegible] with an extatic kiss.

Quickly after the friar entered, to wish

[illegible] the hour of twelve was near at hand, and he said in the eyes of Alphonso the result of his investigation.

Laurent returned to his cell, promising to visit the latter on the following morning, and Alphonso entered the chapel to prepare for midnight prayers.

Alphonso and Laurent passed the night in [illegible] of happiness or woe.

At the appointed hour, Laurent returned to the apartment of Father Matthias, he called his confederate—the hour was [illegible] a bottle and [illegible] long enough for Alphonso, could be charged on the [illegible] for then together at her the wretched [illegible] the [illegible] and cell in the world upon which

fire was about to enter: he fet before her

She did confide her heart, and forgot not

The father had already converted with Alphonfus to the fame purpofe; he was tenderly fixed on again braving thofe viciffitudes of life to which he had already been expofed.

The reft need not be told, for Alphonfus into his apartment.

Alphonfus, covered with [illegible] wept.

Father Matthias again exhorted them to reflection ere it was too late.

Their eyes met each other's; Laurena's own were cast down, and Alphonso seemed to answer for them both, "that they were resolved."

The indissoluble knot was tied.

"The grace of God shine upon you, my children!" cried the old man.— Alphonso embraced his bride, while tears of joy sparkled in his eyes.

"To-morrow morning, with the dawn of day, you must leave these walls," said the holy man; "now retire to your respective apartments, and each collect together what little articles you may possess of value,

They followed his directions.

During the course of the day, the four re-formed such of the nuns as were acquainted with Laurella's story, that she had been summoned to leave the convent by her nearest relation; and they made her modest farewell. "She will depart early in the morning," said the old man; "and we shall, I hear, experience a double loss; for our young lecturer, willing again to mix with the world, will leave us at the same period."

Perdix expressed much astonishment at his being dismissed with his present *disrespect*—told him, "he would find it difficult to meet with such another;" gave him "large billets for his good," as the wag pleased to term them, and concluded herself with the hope that his merciful would prove more

Alphonso exclaimed, "Farewell, my kind friend!" — The old man raised his eyes and hands to heaven; then closed the gates on them for ever.

CHAP. VI.

Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

SUPPORTING herself on the arm of Alphonsus, an hour's journey brought Laureta to Inspruck; where, wishing to avoid the questions of those who might perceive she was newly entered upon the world, she widely concealed the surprise which was excited in her breast on beholding scenes to which she had hitherto been totally a stranger.

After a short repast, the travellers again set forward, and arrived about an hour after mid-day at the spot where Alphonsus had

determined to fix his residence. — A small inn received them for the night, and in the morning Alphonsus repaired to the owner of the houses on the border of the river. Having bargained for the hire of one of the most commodious dwellings then vacant, and purchased the freedom of exercising his intended trade on the river, he next provided himself with the necessary implements for carrying on subsistence; and in a few days entered upon the employment he had chosen for that purpose.

Fortune smiled on his endeavours; his Lauretta was the solace of his unemployed hours: and he enjoyed a great happiness as the mystery which had reduced him to his present humble fortune could offer a thinking mind to enjoy. — Retired from the world,

not inflicting sudden those sudden or untimely which excite the envy of its inhabitants. Alphonsine and his Laurette had hoped to live here long in quiet and unperceived; but they were quickly doomed to experience how short is the durability of human felicity, even in its humblest state.

The profession of the young man which Alphonsine entitled his humble habitation, was the worst shoulder: he was a widower, whose wife had died in childbed together with her infant. He was a man much liked for his benevolence, benignity, and mildness of temper.

His only wife had espoused the chevalier D'Aumont, a native of Burgundy, who having been killed by a fall from his horse a

short time after the death of the baroness Smuldert, madame D'Aignon had ever since resided with the baron.

Theodore, the son and only offspring of the deceased chevalier, now in his twentieth year, had for some time been receiving his education in France, and was expected shortly to return to his uncle's. His mother awaited his return with all the ardour of prejudiced fondness, but she was not permitted again to behold her son. She had for some time been slightly indisposed, and one morning, about the time of Theodore's expected arrival in Germany, was found dead in her bed.

This was a stroke which deeply affected the baron: since the loss of his wife, for whom he had been his associate and most beloved companion, they had been strongly at-

tached to each other; and he had earnestly wished that she might survive him.

At the appointed time Theodore arrived at Trinidad castle. but how great an alteration had taken place in him in the space of five years! When a youth, his every wish had been anticipated by the fatal indulgence of a kind uncle, and a doting mother; but still his manners had been then unaffected, his deportment unassuming, and his mind untainted with vicious habits. But now he was become haughty, impetuous, confident of his own opinion, and eager to give it unasked. The pecuniary allowance made him by his mother had enabled him to pass the greater part of the time allowed for his education, in a variety of dissipation: thus the acquisition of knowledge and learning was neglected by him: nor was he himself con-

tions of his deficiency; having been hitherto connected with a set of men too foolish of their own intrest not to pay implicit deference to his opinion on every occasion.

The baron had promised himself a pleasing companion in his nephew: he had expected to reap edification and amusement from the conversation of his well-informed mind, and hoped to find in him a willing partaker of such diversions as the country afforded.

How millaken were his expectations! Theodore's conversation consisted only in recalling to disgusted recollection, in which he was careful to hold himself up as the principal actor, and the only amusement he found in the sports of the country was to make them pastime a prey for tyranny the

look of those who, from their dependence on his uncle, he well knew would not venture to look twice. In short, had he aimed at making himself the object of general contempt and hatred, he could not have pursued steps that would more unfortunately have gained him his wish.

He often wished that he disputed the great opinion of himself; and his actions plainly showed that he would forego any pleasure or gain a look of approbation from a superior in rank.

At the time of Theodore's arrival in Germany, Laurence was in an advanced state of pregnancy: but the approach and the bitterness of his eyes; and, from the full swelling of his beautiful face, he marked her out for his lustful prey.

trace his visionary path.

tive policy forbade him to refuse obligations he had once accepted, lest he should open to the Chevalier the discovery he had made, and his measures become more determined.

At the expected period Lauretta gave birth to a female infant, whose being was but that of a few hours. Lauretta was much afflicted by the loss of her first-born: Alphonso, though he rejoiced at the safety of his wife, dropped a tear in sympathy with her sorrow at the fate of his child.

The Chevalier appeared daily at the cottage of Alphonso, making the most solicitous inquiries relative to the health of Lauretta, and offering to her, by means of her husband, the most liberal presents, which Alphonso was slow to accept, and that sparingly:—of a refusal he saw the bad consequences.

In the summer, Alphonso was frequently [illegible] nearly half the night by his occupations; but he dreaded not that his Lauretta would then suffer from the perturbations of Theodore, as he had never visited his cottage in an evening; and more particularly as he well knew the gates of the baron Smalfort's castle to be shut at an early hour.

The conduct of Theodore was, however, [illegible] daily more alarming to the timid Lauretta; and she obtained a promise from Alphonso, that, if the shepherd persisted in it, he would appeal to the well-known humanity of the baron.

It was one night, not long [illegible] that Lauretta, full [illegible] pelisse, [illegible] return of her husband, was [illegible]

[illegible] of a girl, whom Algernon had pro-
cured for her as a maid and companion in
his absence, sitting on one of the hassocks
at [illegible] and the girl occasionally ran over to
[illegible]—it seems, proceeding from
the bed, steps on her clothes as quickly as
her alarm would permit her, and was rush-
ing towards the door of the apartment, when
Theodora stood before her. She hesitated,
and endeavoured to pass him: he held her
hand, and exclaiming "my lucky stars are
in [illegible] predominant," dragged her into
the outer apartment.

Isadora again raised her [illegible] voice,
but alas! her cries, had they been heard,
would have been thought to proceed from
her slaves on hearing the cry of fire. "Oh
God of mercy, still me!" she cried. "Oh,
my Alphonso, where art thou?" and,

raising her eyes, which had hitherto been averted from the body stalking Theodore, she perceived, standing near the door, two men, whose bowling mien and haggard looks terrified her more than the villain who held her; and she again uttered a shrill cry.

Theodore cast at her a look of mingled reproach and contempt, and waving his hand to the men, they approached Laurette. She again attempted to escape from Theodore; but the villain overpowered her, and she fainted in their arms.

CHAP. VII.

Eye me, bleſs'd Providence, and ſquare my trial
To my proportion'd ſtrength.

Shakeſ.

Laura, on recovering her ſenſes, found herſelf in total darkneſs; and, by the coarſeneſs of the ſtraw on which ſhe was laid, ſhe knew it was in a cottage. She called aloud, but no one anſwered. She ſtretched out her hand, and felt the head of a bed; and ſhe immediately heard a rough voice, like one ſleeping and waking, utter ſome words which ſhe did not underſtand.

The image of the man who had so greatly alarmed her, returned to her, and she shuddered.

The person who lay by her yawned, and turned himself towards her.

The night, although [illegible] was [illegible] and damp. Laurette was accustomed to the night air—she shuddered with cold—and her teeth chattered violently.

Her companion again yawned, and then sitting up, with his left hand threw his woollen wrapper round her, covered her from the approbation under which she had so [illegible], [illegible] the person who was the cause she had so accidentally touched.

Her poignant anguish of mind which refuses to relieve the sufferer by an effusion of tears, is seldom more favourable to the unhappy Laurina; her repeated attempts to articulate were ineffectual, and the pangs of her heart were redoubled by her involuntary silence. The tears, at length, as expressive of the painful efforts which produced them, flowed freely down her cold cheeks, and with difficulty she again clamoured out, "Where am I?"

"I will answer my question," returned the man. His voice was hoarse, but by no means so blunt and harsh as Laurina's fears had led her to expect.

"Whither am I going?" cried Laurina

This demand was thrice advanced, but no answer returned.

"Is the chevalier D'Aigrem here?" she then asked.

"No," replied a woman. "I know not if I may venture to tell you, for fear the walls"

[illegible] she knew not hope or what to fear; the gloominess of the night added greatly to the depression of her spirits, and the predominant idea within her breast was, that her companion was hired by Theodore to be her murderer, in revenge for his slighted love.

Her companion in a short time after undrefsed her; and, attributing her anxiety to

great measure to the child, which, by the shortening of her teeth, he found fell hung upon her, prefled her to take some brandy out of a flask which had been almoft unconsciously applied to his own lips.

Laurena was infenfible to his attentions. "Oh Alphonso!" fhe cried, "fhall I never again behold you?"—A flood of tears followed the exclamation, and her forrow rofe almoft to phrenzy.

After three hours paffed in a fituation more poignant than a certainty of fuffering the moft dreadful calamities that could have befallen her, the veffels flopped.

Her companion immediately fprang up, and pufhing paft her, opened the door, and rufhed out into the arms of his comrade, by

whole side stood another figure, holding a lantern.

The man who had received her into his arms, conveyed her into the kitchen of a miserable inn, of which it was difficult to say, whether poverty or dirt was the leading feature: he placed her in a chair, and then returning to the door, saluted the landlord with a volley of oaths, which conveyed the double meaning, that the lovers were in want of provender, and he stalk vast of brandy.

He then approached the fire, and kicking away a dog which lay sleeping on the hearth of the chimney, seated himself by Lucretia.

His companion now entered, and placing

[illegible] the weeping boy, the widow [illegible] perceived a faint gleam of joy flash in his eye. We shall benefit at the moment in which he finished the last [illegible] opened to the darkness of [illegible], was her [illegible] and falling at her knees before him, he entreated him to have pity on her helpless situation, and restore her to her Alphonsus. He [illegible] silence, he heard his [illegible] fall from his lips, and turning round her head, she observed that he had drawn his sword nearly out of the [illegible]. All her fears now returned; she [illegible] the hand of [illegible] – [illegible] her was kneeling, raised on hysteric [illegible], and sunk senseless on the floor.

When she revived, the [illegible] still [illegible] the [illegible] was [illegible] to the

[illegible]

While Laurella had remained in a fit of infatuation, the bailiffs had carefully closed her trunks with their padlocks, and were being like returned, preliminary to their departure with a share of the little property which she had before unwarily abandoned.

She was now again placed in the chair which she had before occupied, and calling upon nearly the greatest part of the servants that had entered the kitchen, accused them of the robbery which had been committed in so much haste and alarm; but she was told by him who had been her companion in the vehicle,

Her fainting fit, together with the extreme agitation of her spirits, had brought on a violent pain in her head; and unable any longer to support her drooping frame, she requested the hostess to conduct her to a bed: but with this petition, Kroonzer, the ruffian of whom Laureta stood in so great dread, absolutely commanded her not to comply, saying, he must depart in a very short time. The hostess, though of so masculine a figure, seemed not devoid of the feelings of her sex, and now cast a look at Laureta, which speakingly informed her, she wished to accord to her request, but durst not, from the eye in which the flood of Kroonzer.

After a short interval, Kroonzer ordered the host to bring out the horses and prepare for their departure: his commands were instantly obeyed.

Again lifted into the vehicle, how great were the apprehensions of Laurette on perceiving Kroonzer enter after her, together with another man, on whose countenance the light which proceeded from a lantern held by the latter, falling, it appeared, if possible, more savage than that of the surly Kroonzer.

They again proceeded swiftly along, and for a length of time a strict silence was observed, not less by the men, than by Laurette.

The faint rays of light which now began to break the clouding fog, attended with some chilness to the overburdened frame of Laurette. She recollected, that, had the men received orders to kill her, they would in all probability have executed the deed, whilst

the darkness of the night enabled them to evade the eye of man.

The first objects the dawn of day brought to light, were distant mountains, which towered in sublimity above the white surface of advancing day.— The cold in land over which they were journeying, was lonely and barren, save where at intervals, some small clusters of unpruned vines grew spontaneously on the shelving hillocks.

Her fortitude in some measure returning with the much-wished for light of day, she ventured to inquire, "whither she was going?" — "Not above a league further now," cried Kromen, "wherever we may be at night." — And from this answer she hesitated not to conclude, that, wherever she was about to be conveyed, Theodore, after-

lensive of a rescue, had continued her wanderings apparently travelling in the day time.

The road now turned into a valley: on the left lay high mountains which were speckled with cattle of various kinds; on the right, irregular lines of lofty chestnut and beech trees: it now wound round the mountain, and the sun itself fell upon them between the holes of the trees. Never before had its cheering rays so greatly exhilarated the heart of her who now hailed its return from the bosom of the deep.

A few moments brought them to the extremity of the vale, and they entered upon a small but thickly planted [illegible]; the grounds were covered with [illegible], through which a crew was no difficult path, the wheels found a difficulty in passing, at length entering an

angle, Laurette suddenly perceived a thatched cottage: here the vehicle stopped, and Rolberg, for such was the name of Kroonzer's comrade, having alighted, announced their arrival by a thundering knock with his fist at the door. It was opened by a man half dressed, whose appearance was that of a peasant, and Laurette was conducted into an apartment which served for the double purpose of kitchen and chamber to the countryman and his wife, who, when they entered, was in the act of dressing behind a ragged curtain, which but ill concealed her from her newly arrived guests.

Laurette, unable to stand, instantly seated herself on a bench, which encircled half the fire-place, — unmindful of Kroonzer and his comrade, who had entered into close con-

verſation with the countryman in low voices.

The good woman was no ſooner bridled, than advancing from behind her timid retreat, ſhe began with an apology to Laurette for not having been up ready to receive her, and ended by requeſting her to accompany her to a better apartment. Laurette, with heſitating and unwilling ſteps, followed her leaſtwards up a few ſtairs, ſcarcely ſuperior either in health or ſafety to a ladder, and arrived in a ſmall room, the furniture of which conſiſted of a mean bed, a ſhattered chair, and a large box, which ſerved at once for a wardrobe, a ſeat, and a table.

Having ſhook the chair and ſeated herſelf, [illegible] ſilently to the only chair, [illegible] again apologized for not having been [illegible]

to receive her; for alleged that she had arrived somewhat earlier than her husband had said he expected her.

"Were you then apprised of my coming?" asked Lauretta.

"[illegible] lady," replied Barbara, "and to [illegible] on this chamber ready for you; but I told [illegible], — Lack-a-day, said I, the [illegible] my lady need with journeying all night, and also to rest her wearied limbs, I warrant me."

"[illegible]" said Lauretta, taking the hand of old Barbara, as she stood by her side, — "[illegible] acquainted with the purport for which I am brought hither, for the love of God, I conjure you to inform me."

"The Holy Virgin was, I know not," returned the woman.

"But, tell me, whither I am to be conveyed," continued Laurette, "one of my guards intimated that I am not to remain here longer than to-day."

"Ah! luckaday!" cried Barbe, "I know not indeed! I go by, women are matters, and should not be troubled with secrets. I pushed him hardly to tell me on what account you were coming hither; but he would not."

"Cruel he was indeed!" exclaimed the disconsolate fair.

no harm is going to be done to any body; so make yourself easy."

"In what manner was he informed that I was going to be brought hither?" asked Lauretta.

"By my troth, I know not," answered Barbet. "He told my sister last night, when he came from work in that little forest you see there: he is a wood-cutter."

"Could you find any method of conveying a letter for me to my friends?"

"Not unknown to my husband, I trow, far from hence."

"The village of the baron Ermaldare, on the borders of the river Iser, is the place I allude to."

"Lack-a-day, good soul, that is many leagues from hence; and I never go further than the next village."

Lauretta hung down her head and wept, and Bertha left the apartment.

Unable to take the refreshment with which Bertha in a short time returned, Lauretta threw herself upon the bed; and although fire had never proved building so hard and uncomfortable, the anguish she had undergone soon closed her eyes, but not in peaceful slumbers; the scenes through which she had so lately passed, crowded on her alarmed imagination in more terrific colours than the reality had appeared to her.—now exaggerated by keeping fancy,

CHAP. VIII.

——— Patience and forrow ſtrove
Which ſhould expreſs her goodlieſt.

LEAR.

THE day had been cloſe and ſultry: towards evening the ſky began to lower, and the air ſeemed big with an approaching deluge of rain. Lauretta obſerved them with emotions of melancholy pleaſure: the gloom in which all nature was clad ſeemed in union with her feelings: the contemplation of the ſame ſcene her, till, thought riſing upon thought, ſhe became almoſt inſenſible to her own ſituation. Her reflections were at length interrupted by the entrance of Martha, who brought her a cup of

new milk, some fresh galawai fruit, and a slice of warm bread, at which he continued for so perfect, a breakfast and Rabbi's proposed proceeding on their journey in half an hour's time.

Laurens, in order to plead her blind lover's cause, rather than to betray the wish of mine, which was shunned by extreme grief, called the Goat, and tipped a small quantity of the milk, whilst Rabbi Yaan called each separate argument with which she was possessed, to persuade Laurens that, as her husband had told the last evening to Gay, the wife from the dead man. But not succeeding, appeared to Laurens although the [illegible] not to confirm it, but with to [illegible] consolation.

The voice of Kroonzer now called upon

her so devoted. The feeble resistance she could make, she well knew, would be of no avail; ready compliance might conciliate her guards, she therefore instantly obeyed the summons. Rodney met her at the foot of the stairs, and taking her in his arms, placed her on a horse before his comrade, and then seated himself upon another, which the peasant held till he had mounted it.

A thick darkness blackened the horizon, and a dead silence prevailed, save when, at intervals, short gusts of wind announced a rising storm.

In a few more, vivid flashes of lightning momentarily illumined the atmosphere, and flew across the lofty mountains; the portentous clouds rolled rapidly towards

each other, and jarring, burst in tremendous claps, which, from their loudness, seemed immediately over the heads of Laurens and her companions.

After an hour and a half, as nearly as Laurens could guess, passed in journeying amidst this dreadful concussion of the elements, and in almost lucifluc darkness, except when, at intervals, the daring flashes of lightning seemed to cleave the forest-crown earth in fiches of fire, the storm which, fortunately for the unhappy Laurens, had been attended with but little rain began gradually to subside, and a milder moonlight succeeded.

Their road, for some time, lay through a deep glen. "Oh, God!" the exclaimed, "should this be my destined grave!" and

chilled by the apprehensions her own imagination had [illegible], she insensibly hung down [illegible] and [illegible] closed her eyes.

A length of time elapsed ere she again ventured to look around her; and she then saw that they were entering upon a forest of lofty trees, thickly planted with underwood.

[illegible] and his companion had been in [illegible]

[illegible] tors.

[illegible]

the attacks of Peep, which at [illegible] powered her fainting frame.

Suddenly turning from her [illegible] flumber, she discovered [illegible] fixed her head, and although [illegible] became much clearer, for [illegible] time although very much

A turret, which rose above a distant [illegible] of trees, now caught her gazing eye; and as she proceeded, she discovered that it formed part of a building towards which her [illegible] were advancing.

Her eyes continued fixed on the object before them: and as she approached it, her alarm became extreme: her conductor spoke not, and she waited her doom in anxious silence.

The light of the moon, reflected on the building, showed her that one wing was entirely in ruins, and the whole edifice in a state of decay.

On being lifted from the horse, she was unable to stand; her knees knocked violently; and, almost insensible of her situation, she took upon the supporting arm of Kenneth.

Kenneth having fastened the horse to a broken pillar of the colonnade, pulled hard the heavy gate, which creaked loudly on its hinges. Kenneth then entered the building with Laurens in his arms, and as he placed her on a seat seemingly hewed by a niche in the stone wall, he called to his companion, telling him instantly to strike a light, and chiding him for having wasted his bridge.

His words were re-echoed from every part of the building, and in such a dismally hollow, as caused Lauretta to shudder violently.

Rollergy made no answer, but began talking to the door: — for some moments Lauretta heard the uninterrupted parting of the steel and flint, and, with a heart beating high with the anxious desire of seeing the joyful ray of light which was to release her from the horrid gloom in which she now trembled, she fixed her eyes upon the spot where she found unfortunately for Rollergy a small crevice, whose flash of fiery sparks shone brilliantly on the opposite side of the hall; it appeared as if they proceeded from a lamp on the side on which the door opened; the moment Rollergy turned round his head, and beheld a man who entered a lamp with his back to-

[illegible] door, and a door, which he immediately closed after him.

As the inferior floor of the building had not yet been [illegible] the lead room to doubt [illegible] was concluded, she immediately concluded [illegible] from the bed even to the Rosicrucian [illegible] the house and whence he had passed the night, and again turned her eyes towards Nalborg; when, to her great astonishment, the few there had approached towards her with their loop lighted. A [illegible] which she endeavoured to suppress [illegible] involuntarily from her lips, and she unconsciously pressed the same close [illegible] and she arm and village of a young [illegible] lady, she could not distinguish, [illegible] was waiting it. Theodora's [illegible] of her imagination, the recollection of her

shot like a bolt of ice across her heart, and she sunk lifeless on the ground.

On the return of her senses, she was lying upon an unfurnished bed, and a dim lamp, which was burning in the apartment, flowed her Ruffino standing by her side, the instrument still her eyes raised in search of Theodore, — the apartment was large, and the light thrown out by the lamp insufficient to envelope the distant corners in which the dreaded man was not visible; — raising herself upon the bed, she seized the hand of Ruffino, and, looking into him, conjured him to save her, — to protect her from Theodore." — In as softened accents as his rough voice would permit him to articulate, he bade her be composed, and banish her apprehensions. — With a look of doubt, she again fixed on him her streaming eyes, and grasping more

Bertha fainted from fatigue and hunger, she exclaimed, "May heaven reward you as you pity my misfortunes."

The maid of honour now called her attention to another part of the chamber. Kroonar entered, he brought with him a cup of wine, some fruit, and bread; and having taken the lamp from the ground, he placed them on a table near the bed. He then invited Lenora to rise and refresh herself. The awkward hind only with his eyes, he commanded his attendant, she endeavoured to speak, but her tongue refused her utterance. [illegible] from the bed, she threw herself at his feet, and clasped his knees to plead for her lover and her country. Kroonar [illegible] and [illegible] the apartment; and the hind shut the door locked and bolted after them.

The violent agitation of her spirits being somewhat abated, she took up the lamp, and walked round the apartment, in order to be certified whether any one was lurking within it.—Its form was circular; the roof high and vaulted; the walls of stone; the pavement loosely and many feet raised from the ground; and the entire appearance had for so considerable, that she was now in that cell which had attracted her notice while journeying through the forest.

She then set down the lamp, and taking from her bosom a small ivory crucifix, which she placed on the table, she knelt, and, having fervently declared her gratitude for the sufferings of him in memory of whom she wore the sacred remembrancer now before her, she proceeded to implore of him fortitude, to enable her to bear up un-

der the calamities which surrounded her, and his divine aid, against the evil designs of those whom she dreaded more than death; concluding by a declaration of her faith in his beneficence, and her unfeigned submission to his will.

Rising, and replacing in her bosom the crucifix, she felt a composure proceeding from her confidence in that power she had just addressed, which she little imagined she should have experienced. Still, however, by no means sufficiently free from alarm to endeavour to compose herself to rest, she placed herself in a chair which stood near the bed, and, as from the fatigue of the scene her nerves became gradually abated, she grew more collected, and better able to ruminate on the occurrences of the night.

The figure of the man whom she had seen was unremittingly before her eyes; and the feelings of her mind naturally affixing to him the person of Theodore, her fears began to return as strongly as ever: she sighed deeply, and the tears ran swiftly down her burning cheeks;—she rose, and walked slowly about the apartment, stopping at intervals and fixing her swoln eyes on the ground in mournful reflection on the past, and poignant anticipation of the future.

Faint and enfeebled with fatigue of body, and anguish of mind, she again seated herself on the sofa.—In a short time, the [illegible] of which hung upon her wearied almost [illegible], her eyes [illegible], and the [illegible] of perspiration started from her temples;—following [illegible] arm, and grasped the cup of water;

CHAP. IX.

Tho' plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,
Yet never let the noble mind despair:
When griefs by dangers, and beset with foes,
The gods upon mortals frown interpose;
And when our virtue seems o'erwhelm'd with grief,
By unexpected expedients bring relief.

Pomfret.

LAURETTA, on waking, started from her chair, and cast her eyes wildly about, totally ignorant where she was; and, entirely forgetful of all that had passed the preceding evening, her little recollection vividly turned upon her with all its horrors: She sighed, and raised her eyes to the high valances of the bed of state she had slept on; the magnificence

wondered, and marvelled that she had slept so long and soundly: she moved towards the door: it was left unfastened: and, from what the remainder of the inquisition of the night-torment her prison contained, she saw not the dreadful cause for suspecting that any one had visited it during the night. She examined the lamp; it was burnt out in the socket, and the cup of wine stood on the ground where she herself had placed it.

Towards evening, the creaking of the locks announced Kroonzer: he entered with a fresh supply of provisions; which, together with a flask of wine, and another of water, he placed upon the table; and, having trimmed the wick of the lamp, and replenished the wasted oil, he lighted it, and left the apartment, without uttering a single word.

The artificial light produced by the lamp tended swiftly to dispel the declining day, and, with the increasing gloom, the horrors of her situation were greatly accumulated in the imagination of the unhappy Lauretta.

Night had attired her direful form, when the fair prisoner, thieving from the anxious to which the bed pulled the solitary day, and still feeling a reluctance to commit herself to the oblivion of sleep, began slowly to contemplate her situation — languid and feeble she dropped, and, reclining her arm against the stony wall, her head rude carelessly upon her hand, and the flood wrapped in pensive thought. Suddenly the trampling of horses struck her ear — she listened, and listened — a thrill neither wholly alive benumbed, and for awhile bound the sense of reason. Leaving with

the cheering hope of relief, but fears he'd might within her breath, and her respiration became suppressed. "The kind woman," she exclaimed, "has lent her aid to my Alphonso, and they are come to my relief!"

An interval of dead silence ensued; — the monk inwards the door, and, trembling with expectation, doubted whether or not the silence would interfere. But his conscience pained his agitated frame had deceived her.

Another interval longer than the first rolled away, but no sound met her attentive ear. Delusive hopes, however, rallied in her agitated breast the determined possibility, that her friends might be searching for her in some distant part of the building, and would still arrive at her prison.

A confusion of footsteps and voices seemingly approaching towards her apartment, now rattled in her panting bosom a tumult of passions, amongst which fear was predominant. Till this instant, the pleasing expectation of enjoyment, and reflection on her beloved Alphonsus, had wholly occupied her imagination: now the hated Theodore occurred to her, and every thought turned to increase the dreadful probability, that he might the next moment be destined to fall a victim to his unruly passion, or breathe her last breath in his amorous arms.

'Tis still increased, and the noise seemed still to advance. "This way, this way," exclaimed an ardent voice; "follow me, this way." [illegible] with extreme attention. [illegible] door shook her heart, and the next

cried out, "The key is not here; ask it of Kroonaer."

Laurita stood motionless: several voices now spoke at the same time, but so confusedly, that she could not distinguish a word they uttered. Suddenly, all the persons present to recede from her prison as swiftly as they had advanced towards it; and the sounds dying gradually away, an awful silence again prevailed.

Trembling lest they should return, Laurita still continued near the door: she knew not how to account for what she had heard; and the more she ruminated, the more she was bewildered in her conjectures.

A length of time having elapsed, and not the smallest sound met her ear, her alarm

began to subside; and the power of reflection returning, she felt in its fullest force the mortifying disappointment she had sustained: at that moment every future prospect of liberty seemed to have vanished in the present; she burst into a flood of tears, and, sinking upon the bed, gave way to the strongest paroxysms of despair.

Oh hope! thou cheering shadow of each distant object! why does the blackening gloom of disappointment so often cloud the fairy path through which thou leadest us, glowing at every anxious step with warmer expectation? while fancy, strengthening with delay, fixes the reality, and makes us in imagination *dwell*, until the dream-dispelling dawn of *reality* opens our eyes, and leaves us *the* without *the* goal, as distant

ſtill, as when we firſt began the imaginary courſe!

The mind, haraſſed beyond its bearing, ſeeks inſenſibly the balm deſigned by nature for its reſtoration. Thus the fair priſoner, on again opening her eyes to her ſolitary room, found ſhe had taſted its efficacious ſweets, although ſhe had not courted its powers.

During the greateſt part of the day, ſhe continued upon the bed, loſt in weeping and meditation. The approach of evening again introduced Kroonzer into her apartment: he had brought with him more fruit and another flaſk of water. He expreſſed great ſurpriſe at her not having taſted what he had ſet before her the former evening, and aſked her to partake of what he had now brought.

She paid little attention to his invitation; but beſought him to explain to her the occurrences of the preceding night. He did not anſwer her; but, having prepared the lamp, he lighted it, and left the chamber; repeating the entreaty he had before urged, for her to eat ſome of the fruit and bread.

Not in compliance with the requeſt of Kroonzer, but the calls of Nature, Lauretta eat of the fruit and bread, and drank a large cup of water: the wine ſhe determined not to taſte, concluding, from the effect it had produced on her the firſt night of her impriſonment, that its nature was ſomniferous; and, although ſhe wiſhed for an oblivion of her cares, ſhe had not ſufficient reſolution to act herſelf towards the production of it; apprehenſive of what might befall her in a ſtate of inſenſibility.

Thus paſſed on ſix melancholy days, in a courſe of ſad reflection, perplexed by a variety of conjectures, and cheared only by the idea that Alphonſus was ignorant of her ſufferings.

No human being entered her priſon ſave Kroonzer, who never failed at the accuſtomed hour; but obſerved an impenetrable ſilence to every interrogatory made him by Lauretta, relative to her ſituation.

No ſounds ſimilar to thoſe ſhe had heard on the ſecond night of her impriſonment returned: ſhe concluded herſelf a priſoner for life, and deſpair began to ſubſide into calm melancholy.

Towards midnight of the ſeventh day, ſhe was awakened from the ſoundeſt ſleep

ſhe had for ſome time enjoyed, by a violent craſh of thunder, which ſhook the turret: ſhe ſprang from the bed, and ſtood a moment in wild alarm, ſcarcely recollecting where ſhe was, or knowing what ſhe had heard; when a flaſh of lightning ſtruck that ſide of the turret againſt which ſhe was leaning; the wall inſtantaneouſly fell, and carried along with it the ſhrieking Lauretta.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.